

IN AND AROUND THE  
ISLE OF PURBECK

BY IDA WOODWARD



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IN AND AROUND THE  
ISLE OF PURBECK







CORFE CASTLE

# IN AND AROUND THE ISLE OF PURBECK

BY IDA WOODWARD WITH THIRTY-SIX  
PLATES IN COLOUR BY JOHN W. G. BOND



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DEDICATED  
TO  
MY FRIEND  
AMY ELEANOR FANE





AND oh ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves,  
Think not of any severing of our loves!  
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;  
I only have relinquished one delight,  
To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
I love the brooks, which down their channels fret,  
Even more than when I tripp'd lightly as they:  
The innocent brightness of a new-born day  
Is lovelier yet;  
The clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;  
Another race hath been, and other palms are won,  
Thanks to the human heart by which we live;  
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys and fears;  
To me the meanest flower that grows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

WORDSWORTH.



## PREFACE

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IDA WOODWARD.

*August, 1907.*

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IN AND AROUND THE  
ISLE OF PURBECK



# IN AND AROUND THE ISLE OF PURBECK

## CHAPTER I

### A GENERAL SURVEY

THE Isle of Purbeck, which is an island by courtesy only, is a peninsula situated at the south-east corner of the county of Dorset. It is bounded on the north by the River Frome and by Poole Harbour, on the east and south by the English Channel, and on the west by an imaginary line that might be drawn from Worbarrow Bay to the source of the little stream called Luckford Lake, and continued over Povington Heath by the course of the same stream till it joins the Frome about a mile above Holme Bridge.

As in *Domesday Book* Purbeck was called either Porbi or Porbicke, the name may have been derived from Porbeck, which meant pasture lands as distinguished from heath lands.

The length of the island from Peveril Point to Luckford Lake is twelve miles, and its width from Arne to St. Aldhelm's Head ten miles.

The island used to comprehend two hundreds, Hasler<sup>1</sup> comprising the western half and Rowbarrow the eastern ; it contained nine parishes, and was more populous in Saxon times than at the present day. The Purbeck Hills, which divide the north of the island from the south, begin at Ballard Point on the east, extend to Corfe Castle, where they dip for a moment to admit of the passage of the little Corfe River, then rise again, and continue in a westerly direction till they finally end at Arish Mell, a little east of West Lulworth. Further south a lower range extends from Swanage, past Kingston and Kimmeridge, to Worbarrow. The eastern part of the island is the most fertile, and the country between Corfe and Swanage affords excellent pasture for both cattle and sheep. The northern portion is chiefly barren heath land which produces heather and gorse ; here and there, however, there are oasis-like spots of fertility.

The extraordinarily primitive character of the island is accounted for by the fact that it was a favourite hunting-ground of Saxon and Norman kings, and was, like the New Forest, subjected to strict forest laws ; consequently very few houses were built and very little land was tilled.

In ancient times Purbeck was much more isolated than it is now ; there were no bridges across the River Frome, and the high hills and marshy lands on the west did not attract immigrants from that quarter.

From a geological point of view Purbeck is particularly interesting. The coast line from Peveril Point to Worbarrow Bay shows us how Neptune, as the arbiter of marine denudation, has scored this part of the coast, in some cases isolating

<sup>1</sup> Called by some historians Hasilor.

great fragments of rock from the cliffs, in other cases wearing deep hollows and bays in the softer strata. The peculiar ruggedness of the coast, and the extraordinary geological character of the island, are accounted for by earth stresses which occurred at some remote period. Evidences of some tremendous change in the earth's surface are found not only in the diversity of the strata and their numerous contortions, but in the fossil remains, found in the locality, of tropical animals, which doubtless wandered from the Continent at the time when Britain was actually attached to Europe.

The beds of Purbeck stone in the island are the highest of the Jurassic series in England. They are differentiated from the rest of the series by many peculiarities, which show that they were accumulated at a time when geographical conformation and animal and vegetable life were undergoing a great change, and may be divided into three groups :—

(1) The Lower Purbecks, remarkable for the soil caps, which in some places contain so many stumps of trees as to have obtained the name of "fossil forests." The strata of this subdivision consist for the most part of fresh-water limestones and clays, with some gypsum in places.

(2) The Middle Purbecks, which constitute the most important subdivision from an economic point of view, since the principal stone beds of the Swanage workmen occur on this level. They present a curious alternation of fresh-water with marine estuarine conditions, and towards the centre contain the well-known "Cinder-Bed," which is an accumulation of small, distorted oysters.

(3) The Upper Purbecks, where fresh-water conditions almost exclusively prevail. Here occurs the Purbeck marble,

which adorns so many of our medieval cathedrals and churches.

Taking the coast line from Worbarrow to Studland, one finds that the geological interest almost equals the scenic beauty. At Worbarrow the ends of all the strata can be clearly seen ; at Kimmeridge there is the black bituminous shale sometimes used for burning, and generally renowned in connection with the so-called "coal-money," of which more hereafter. This shale dips as towards the east, and at St. Aldhelm's Head it is below the sea-level. Above this shale is the Portland sand, and above that the hard rocks known as Portland stone. It is these hard rocks which form the iron-bound coast from Gad Cliff to St. Aldhelm's Head. St. Aldhelm's Head once passed, the shore shows cliffs of Purbeck stone, and here and there a quarry can be seen. There is Portland stone at the base of Durlleston Head which is overlaid by somewhat shattered Purbeck strata. The celebrated Purbeck marble is found near Peveril Point. Swanage Bay has been hollowed out in a series of yellow sands, and the Purbeck Beds are overlaid with various clays and sands known as the Wealden Beds. The cliff at Punfield Cove, at the foot of Ballard Down, has such varied strata that it requires a geologist to describe it, therefore I quote a passage from a paper on the geology of Swanage by Mr. Horace B. Woodward, F.G.S. :—

" Now we reach Punfield Cove, at the foot of Ballard Down, and here, crowded as it were in a small geographical compass, are several geological divisions, whose position is unfortunately much obscured by slips. The upper portion of the Wealden Beds comprises a series of shales, and these are



overlaid by blue clays, laminated beds of sand and clay, and ferruginous beds, classed as Lower Greensand. Higher still in position are the dark blue and bluish-green sandy clays known as Gault, and then come green and yellow sandy beds, with harder bands or nodules of stone, classed as Upper Greensand. All these groups of strata underlie the chalk which now rises in the bold hill of Ballard Down, part of the Purbeck Hill, and is abruptly cut off in the cliff, which rises about 260 feet above the sea-level. The dip of the chalk is almost vertical for some little distance. Then a remarkable fault is shown, which brings a curved and gently undulating mass of chalk abruptly against and over the highly enclosed beds, as if the former had been forced over the latter; indeed, the fault in part of its course coincides with the stratification of the higher beds of chalk."

There are several detached pinnacles of chalk along the coast, the most conspicuous being the one at the extreme corner called "Old Harry," whose square column contrasts with the pyramidal shape of the others. Until 1896 there was a companion pinnacle called "Old Harry's wife," but she was washed away in a severe gale in that year. The chalk between Foreland and Studland Bay is almost horizontal; at the southern corner of the bay the Eocene strata overlie it, and the surface of the latter is "piped" at the junction of the Reading Beds. More will be said about the geology of the interior of the island in the chapter about Creech Barrow, as from this eminence one can see, almost as from a balloon, the natural features of Purbeck.

The earliest inhabitants of Dorset, and incidentally of Purbeck, were a branch of the Celtic race of Belgæ, called Durotriges, which meant "Men of the Water Vale." The capital of their principality was called Durnovaria, which

eventually became Dorchester. Little is known of Purbeck in British and Roman times. Bindon Hill, near Lulworth, is the site of a Celtic village or town, and Flowers Barrow of a Roman or British camp. The most important barrows on the island, according to Mr. Charles Warne, F.S.A., are at the following places: St. Aldhelm's Head, where were found fragments of coal-money as well as skeletons; South Afflington, where there are traces of cremation. The Afflington Barrow was large and bowl-shaped, and contained besides the usual bones some pieces of Roman ware, part of a metal clasp, a small stud, and a flint arrow-head; Knowle Hill, where the barrow contained besides bones some British pottery; Creech Hill and Holme Heath, where were found only bones and ashes; and Ulwell, the largest of the numerous barrows on Ballard Down, which contained amongst other things a skeleton with a small drinking-cup by its side. The last barrow of any importance mentioned is the one at Tyneham.

There is a Roman road from Dorchester to Wareham, and it is more than probable that Roman visitors to Bath frequently landed at Swanage and travelled by way of Corfe and Wareham to that city. The Romans caused the quarries of Purbeck to be worked to provide stone and marble for their numerous buildings. Mr. Moule says in his book on Old Dorset that he was taken to Creech, near Wareham, to behold in the middle of a ploughed field "the foundation, coloured pavement, and bath furnace of a seemingly handsome Roman house just discovered by accident."

The West Saxons found Durotrigia, now Dorset, particularly difficult to subdue, the inhabitants being stubbornly brave, and the interior inaccessible chiefly from geographical





The Purbeck Hills, 1898

THE PURBECK HILLS FROM POOLE HARBOUR



reasons. Along the whole coast from Lyme Regis to Poole there were only three places where ships could land—Bridport, Weymouth, and Swanage; neither the valley of Bridport nor that of Weymouth penetrated far inland, and Swanage has always proved a snare to invaders, as the south-east gales to which it is exposed often dashed ships against the outstanding rocks. The eastern side of the principality and most of the north was bordered by the great forest of Selwood, called by the British Coit Mawr; and in the west were the strongholds of the Welsh. As the Saxon chronicler naturally omits as much as possible to mention the defeats of his own people, we know very little of the relation between the Britons and the West Saxons in the sixth century. In 521, however, a great battle was fought at Mons Badonicus, or Baden Hill, which hill was, according to Dr. Guest and Mr. Moule, none other than the hill crowned with the remains of an ancient fortification at Badbury Rings, near Wimborne, and only twelve miles from Purbeck. The battle resulted in a great victory for the British, who are said to have been led by that puissant paladin and hero of romance, King Arthur. In connection with this last of King Arthur's twelve great victories Nennius says: "In this engagement nine hundred and forty fell by his hand alone, no one but the Lord affording him assistance." By this battle the Saxons were driven back and West Wales saved for the British for nearly a century longer.

We hear nothing more of importance of the Durotriges and Gervissas for nearly a hundred years, when the *English Chronicle* informs us that in 614 "Cynegils and Cuichelm (his son) fought at Beandune and slew two thousand Welsh-

men and sixty-five." If Beandune is, as many think, Bindon, near West Lulworth, we may look upon this terrible defeat of the British as the real beginning of the conquest of Dorset by the Saxons.

In the year 592 there is the following entry in the *Chronicle*: "In this year there was a great slaughter in Britain at Woddesbury, and Ceawlin was slain." As Ceawlin, King of Wessex, was vanquished by his own subjects in conjunction with the native Britons, we gather that the antagonism between the conquering and the conquered races of Saxons and Britons was at an end.

The West Saxons who settled amongst the Durotriges were called Dornsæti or Dorsæti, and becoming the dominant race, as elsewhere in England, gave the Celtic name for this part of the country a Teutonic form. As usual, the invaders showed local independence and had their own aldermen, owing allegiance only to the King of Wessex at Winchester. In the eighth century they also had their own bishopric.

Wessex generally was converted to Christianity by the great St. Birinus, who undertook the mission on the advice of Pope Honorius. He was most successful, bringing into his Church not only the people of Wessex, but also Cynegils the King. With all his enthusiasm, however, Birinus did not penetrate as far as this island, and it was not till half a century later that St. Aldhelm, the first Bishop of Sherborne, taught the people of Purbeck the religion of Christ. He built for them a church at Corfe, a wall of which still stands. As St. Aldhelm was by far the greatest man connected with Purbeck in Saxon times, it will not be out of place to give a brief sketch of his life and work.

St. Aldhelm was born in 635, and was the son of a certain Kenten, who was a Christian. He is supposed to have been a relative of King Cynegils. He received his earlier training at Malmesbury, probably under the Irish scholar Meldum, from whom Malmesbury—Meldum's Byrig—took its name. Eventually St. Aldhelm went to Canterbury, where he studied for two years under the learned Abbot Adrian; he then returned to Malmesbury, where he succeeded Meldum as head of the school there. The place was so poor when he arrived that the monks had not enough to eat, but by his strenuous labours and religious fervour the old priory was raised to the status of an abbey and its material condition vastly improved. The new Abbot gathered companies of religious men and women around him and taught them the beauties of a pure and holy life.

In 705, when at the instigation of Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, the diocese of Wessex was divided into two, with Winchester as the centre of the old and Sherborne of the new, Abbot Aldhelm of Malmesbury was chosen to be the first Bishop of Sherborne. For four years St. Aldhelm worked in his new see, and in spite of age and ill-health would not cease from his labours till, on the 25th of May, 709, he ended his meritorious career. When on one of his frequent journeys round his diocese he was taken seriously ill at Doulting, he told those who were with him to carry him to the church, where he lay down on a marble slab and died. There is a story to the effect that his death was intimated to his friend the Bishop of Worcester in a dream. The Midland Bishop at once hurried to Doulting and made arrangements for the body of the saint to be conveyed to Malmesbury.



The cortège took seven days to complete the journey, stopping each night at a place where a cross was afterwards erected. St. Aldhelm was buried at Malmesbury, where his shrine eventually became famous for miracles.

The great works of his life were the conversion of the heathen of Purbeck and the building of Sherborne Abbey. He also persuaded King Ina to restore and rebuild Glastonbury Abbey. Of his writings, the best known are his letters to the Abbess Hildelith on Virginity, and to Acicius (really the learned King of Northumbria, Ealdfrith) on Latin grammar and poetic metre. This latter contained numerous riddles in verse.

During his life St. Aldhelm is said to have performed six miracles, of which I will give a short account.

Before he became a bishop, and while he was Abbot of Malmesbury, possibly in the year 700, St. Aldhelm visited Rome. The object of his visit was to obtain apostolic privileges for his monasteries of Malmesbury and Frome. Most of the miracles attributed to him were performed while he was on this journey. The first was in its effect posthumous. While waiting at a place near Wareham, probably Worth, for a calm sea, the Abbot desired his followers to build a church in which to pray for a safe passage across the Channel. The walls of this church were standing in William of Malmesbury's time, but the roof was gone. The miraculous part of the story was that, although the church was roofless, not one drop of rain ever fell within its walls, no matter how fierce and furious a storm might be raging all around. The next miracle occurred in Rome. After singing Mass, St. Aldhelm took off his chasuble and threw it to the



CHAPEL OF ST. ALDHELM, ST. ALDHELM'S HEAD



CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN, WAREHAM





server whose duty it was to take it. The server not being in his place, the vestment would have fallen to the floor had not a sunbeam, shining through the east window, caught it and held it suspended in mid-air until the careless acolyte arrived. The next miracle performed by the saint in the Holy City is called the miracle of the babe. A boy was born in the house of one of the Pope's chamberlains, and aspersions were cast upon the moral character of the unpopular Sergius I. St. Aldhelm, hearing of this, commanded that the infant, aged nine days, should be brought to him. He first baptised it, and then asked it whether the scandalous report with regard to its parentage was true. The child replied in the most absolute way that it was not, and that Sergius the Pope was a holy and righteous man.

His petitions having been granted by the Pope, St. Aldhelm set out for England. Amongst his treasures was a large marble altar-slab, eighteen inches thick, four feet long, and beautifully carved. This treasure was fastened on the back of a camel for transit. In climbing a very steep path the unfortunate camel fell, seriously injuring itself, and breaking the marble slab. The saint, however, with prayers and hand outstretched in blessing, healed the camel and repaired the broken marble, a scar being left on the stone as a memorial of the miracle. On returning home, St. Aldhelm gave the altar-slab to King Ina, who placed it in St. Mary's Church at Brunton. The next miracle performed by the saint was at Malmesbury. When the church of St. Mary was being built, a beam was found to be too short. As the timber had to be brought from a long distance, the failure of one piece to serve its purpose was a serious catastrophe. In their distress the

workmen appealed to the saint for assistance. Praying silently over the beam, St. Aldhelm pulled it out to the required length.

The miracle of his stilling of the storm at Dover was the only one recorded to have been worked after St. Aldhelm had become Bishop of Sherborne. The Bishop, while visiting his friend Berhtwald, Archbishop of Canterbury, went down to see some French ships arrive. On one of these ships there was a copy of the Old and New Testament, which the saint desired to possess for his abbey at Sherborne. The vendors asked such a high price for it that St. Aldhelm felt constrained to argue the point. The merchants, annoyed at their goods being depreciated, put off to sea. Immediately a hurricane arose, and the vessel was in danger of foundering. Realising that this was their punishment for rudeness to the saint, they cried to him for mercy. He at once pardoned them, made the sign of the cross over the raging waters, and stilled the storm. The merchants on landing in safety offered the book as a present to the Bishop. He, however, insisted on paying them a sum between what he had originally offered and what they had demanded. This ancient book was still to be seen in William of Malmesbury's day, not at Sherborne, but at Malmesbury.

After Purbeck had been converted to Christianity, and consequently to some extent civilised, it became, as has been said, a favourite hunting-ground for kings. Frequently, indeed, the sporting Saxon monarchs, riding their great rough horses and followed by a train of fifty or a hundred thegns and carles, chased the deer over the hills and heaths of the island.

As the transport of provisions was in those days very difficult, the kings wisely arranged to have *pied-à-terre* in the shape of manor-houses at convenient places on their estates. These manor-houses were let to stewards or reeves, who managed the farms attached and entertained the king and his retinue when they arrived.

For the description of a Saxon manor or "tun" I cannot do better than again quote Mr. Moule :—

"The curious feature of a Saxon great house . . . was that every room, or almost every room, was a separate building, all of them of wood or turf. There was in a Saxon thegn's 'tun' the great hall, a rough, spacious, and fairly lofty edifice, no grate, no chimney, only a hearth fire in the middle of the floor and an opening in the roof for the smoke to get away, at least some of it. There was no glass in the windows, and even the doors seem to have stood open mostly."

In 876 Purbeck may be said to have for the first time played its part in actual modern history, for in that year, according to the *Chronicle*, the Danes "stole away to Wareham," where King Alfred made peace with them. In spite of having sworn on their "holy armlet," the invaders did not return to Denmark, but some, stealing the King's horses, rode to Exeter, and the rest remained in Wareham for the winter, pillaging the neighbourhood, particularly the town of Wool.

In 877 the Danes of Wareham embarked and sailed down Poole Harbour *en route* for Swanage. When they arrived at Ballard Point, however, they encountered not only King Alfred's ships, but a terrific storm, and, as in the case of the Spanish Armada, nearly seven hundred years later, the arms of England, combined with the forces of nature, were too

much for the invader, and the Danish fleet of 120 ships was completely wrecked.

The next event of interest that occurred in Purbeck was the murder of King Edward the Martyr by his stepmother Elfrida at Corfe Castle in 978. This, with other events concerning Corfe, will be dealt with in another chapter.

In 988 the Danes came again to Wareham, and in 1018 King Knut visited the island.

After the Norman Conquest Purbeck was still kept as a royal demesne, and was ruled by the lord lieutenant, who usually lived at Corfe Castle, and who had the power to raise a regiment of militia. This power ceased when the Militia Bill was passed in 1757. Corfe Castle was used both as a royal residence and a state prison; amongst those who were incarcerated there were Robert of Normandy, Eleanor, the Damsel of Bretagne, and Edward II. During King John's reign the regalia was kept there.

There were three royal lodges on the island—one at Slepe, one on Creech Barrow, and one on a hill near Swanage.

Until the reign of Henry VIII, each side of the island had its own magistrate, who was called a baylye. That monarch, however, united the two offices in the person of William Uvedale. Edward VI granted the governorship to the Duke of Somerset, and Elizabeth to Sir Christopher Hatton.

Though James I in 1615 was the last English king who hunted in the Isle of Purbeck we know that game was still abundant, as in 1618 and 1625 courts were commanded to be held in connection with game laws.

During the Civil War the country people generally sided with the Parliamentarians, but Corfe Castle was held for King





Swanage JWB

HIGH STREET, SWANAGE



Wareham JWB

CHURCH OF LADY ST. MARY, WAREHAM



Charles by Lady Bankes for nearly three years, after which gallant defence she evacuated the castle with the honours of war, but the building was blown up by gunpowder, or "slighted," by the order of Cromwell in 1645.

After the destruction of its ancient capital, Corfe Castle, the Isle of Purbeck ceased to play any important part in history. Once the playground of kings, now not one foot of it belongs to the Crown; instead of having its own governor, it is now under the jurisdiction of the lord lieutenant of the County of Dorset. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

Although for more than two hundred years the Isle of Purbeck has taken no part in the making of history, it has one charm which "age cannot wither nor custom stale," and that is the beauty and infinite variety of its scenery. In little more than ten square miles of territory there are hills and dales, woodlands and marshes, rugged coasts and valleys sloping gently to the sea. The lanes are narrow and winding, with banks covered with flowers. From the hills near Studland one can see on the east Poole, better known as Bournemouth Bay, the yellow cliffs from the Haven to Hengistbury Head, and a little further east the Isle of Wight. Nearer, across a plain of gorse and heather, Poole Harbour lies sprinkled with a hundred islands and promontories. To the north, "Egdon" Heath fades away into the blue distance. Between the hills to the west one catches a glimpse of the calm water of Swanage Bay.

Swanage, which in these days plays the part of Constantinople to Corfe's Rome, is now actually the capital of the island. If there is a word to be said against Swanage, it is that red brick houses are multiplying too quickly in its

vicinity. But the loss of primitive picturesqueness is the price a place must pay for popularity—it must either blush unseen or suffer from the machinations of the jerry-builder.

From the ruins of Corfe to the strong Tudor castle of Lulworth, from the marshes of Arne to the wind-swept promontory of St. Aldhelm's Head, the island is beautiful. Even its numerous stone and marble quarries do not detract from its charm.

The inhabitants, though poor, are contented and courteous. The cottages are built of white stone and often thatched, and the large houses resemble, and, indeed, in some cases actually are, medieval manors.

Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair, with orchard lawns,  
And bowery hollows, crown'd with summer sea.





OLD MILL, SWANAGE

Swanage 1898



## CHAPTER II

### SWANAGE

"The heavenly bay, ringed round with cliffs and moors,  
Storm-stained ravines, and crags that lawns inlay,  
Soothes as with love the rocks whose guard secures  
The heavenly bay."—SWINBURNE.

**S**WANAGE lies, as Thomas Hardy observes, "snug between two headlands as between a finger and thumb." From the sea it looks like a grey-green kite with a red rosette at the end of its tail. On nearer approach this impression fades, and the kite is found to be the cluster of grey buildings with the stone-slab roofs so characteristic of the place, interspersed with trees, which forms the old town, and the rosette the Grand Hotel and the new red houses that surround it, the intermedium being the Esplanade and Victoria Hotel Gardens.

The derivation of the name of this village, called by Hutchins "Swanwich, Sandwich, vulgo Swanage," is vague. There is one mythical legend to the effect that a royal swannery was once kept there and gave rise to the name, whilst another, less mythical, says that Sweyn, a Danish admiral, perished in the bay; *wic* is the Anglo-Saxon for a curve in the shore, so the place may have been called from this Sweyn's wic. It seems more probable, however, that *Swanage* is a

corruption of *Sandwich*, which means sand village, a most appropriate name for a small hamlet with a big sandy shore.

Though not mentioned definitely by the Romans, there is no doubt that the seaside quarries and excellent harbour of Swanage were known to them, and it is more than probable that it was one of the landing-places for travellers from the Eternal City to Bath. The fact that a road which branches from the well-known Fosse Way from Bath to Seaton leads to Wareham and Swanage substantiates this theory.

The first time that Swanage is mentioned in the *Saxon Chronicle*, and indeed the only time that this maritime village is alluded to in connection with an important event in the history of England, is in the year 877, when, as was said above, the Danish fleet was destroyed off Peveril Point.

In *Domesday Book*, Swanage, or Swanwick as it is called, is said to have been divided into two parts: the northern, Suuanwick, being held by the wife of Hugh Fitz Grip, who held much land in Purbeck; and the southern, Sonwick, by Ida, Countess of Boulogne, daughter of Geoffrey, third Duke of Lorraine. Afterwards both estates were parcelled out into manors, each of which has passed through many vicissitudes during the eight and a half centuries that have since elapsed, and of which I shall have occasion to speak more fully later on. At the present time, roughly speaking, Suuanwick belongs to the families of Bankes, Robinson, and Marsden; Sonwick to the Earl of Eldon, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Mowlem.

Perhaps the first thing that strikes a visitor to Swanage is the extraordinary juxtaposition of ancient relics and modern developments, of old stone and new brick; streets of bright



SWANAGE

Swanage 1WGA





houses and gay shops branch off from the old-world, grey-flanked High Street, which is itself as steep and narrow as a lane in old Mentone. The façade and doorway of the Town Hall, designed by Sir Christopher Wren, once belonging to the Mercers' Hall in London, was brought to Swanage by Mr. Burt, and bears the inscription: "Cheapside 1670 Swanage 1882." The old prison hides itself behind the Town Hall. It is a stone building, twelve feet by eight, low-roofed and insignificant. Above its nail-studded door is carved the following inscription: "Erected for the prevention of wickedness and vice by the friends of Religion and good order." Purbeck House, the most conspicuous building in High Street, stands almost opposite the Town Hall. It is built of Purbeck stone, and has towers and gables which rise high above all the neighbouring buildings. Mr. Burt built the house on the site of an old British monastery, and ornamented the façade with oddly-shaped pieces of granite chipped off the stone used for the Albert Memorial in Kensington, which he obtained while he was contractor for the building of that monument. The mosaic floor of the entrance hall was copied from an old Roman pavement found by Mr. Mowlem nineteen feet beneath the ground in London, when the excavations for the building of the Mansion House were being carried on in 1869.

The clockless clock-tower also came from London. Originally it was erected on London Bridge as a memorial to the Duke of Wellington. When the bridge was widened, no place being found for the tower, it was presented to Mr. Mowlem, the contractor, who in turn presented it to the then owner of the Grove estate at Swanage, by whom it was put

up in its present prominent position on the southern arm of the bay. The once beautiful tower has lately lost its pinnacle' and in place of that graceful adornment it has a dome of stone, which resembles more than anything a somewhat flattened extinguisher.

Not far from Purbeck House, but on the other side of the road, the ivy-covered cottage where John Wesley once stayed while holding a mission for quarrymen nestles in a luxuriant garden.

The church, dedicated to St. Mary, is also an emblem of both past and present. The body is modern, having been built in 1860; the tower is so old that it is regarded, according to tradition, as a pre-Christian edifice. Probably this really means that it was built before the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity. In any case, it is generally supposed to be the oldest building on the island, not even excepting Corfe Castle. As it is entirely devoid of architectural decoration, it was in all probability built as a fortification by the early Saxon kings; its walls are extremely thick and it is eighty feet high. The original church, a small building attached to the east side of the tower, which was Early English in architecture, was a chapel of ease to Worth, and the old road by which the priests travelled from one church to the other still exists under the name of Priest's Way. It is really little more than a bridle-path.

On the west side of the tower is that curious stone-flanked stream where the old swannery may have existed.

When Kingsley saw Swanage he described it as a "quaint, old-world village which slopes down to the water over green downs, quarried, like some gigantic rabbit burrow, with the stone workings of seven hundred years."





Swanage 1958

SWANAGE



Swanage now rejoices in an esplanade, a pier, pleasure steamers, three large hotels of the most modern type, innumerable houses and rooms "to let," and shops with plate-glass windows.

When Ethelberta, of Hardy's creation, visited it, "everybody in the parish who was not a boatman was a quarrier, unless he were the gentleman who owned half the property and had been a quarryman, or the other gentleman who owned the other half and had been to sea."

Quarrymen are now in the minority, and lodging-house owners and shopkeepers have taken their place, whilst very few real Swanagers are any longer to be found in Swanage. An old lady, the wife of a quarryman, told me with an air of superiority, like that of an elderly scion of a county family when speaking of a neighbouring commercial town, that she hardly knew any one in the place now. It is to this old lady's husband that I am indebted for my knowledge of the customs of quarriers not mentioned in history.

For the metamorphosis of this old-world village into a flourishing and fashionable town, Mr. Burt and the London and South Western Railway Company are chiefly responsible; the former by letting parts of the Durlleston estate for building purposes, and the latter by facilitating the conveyance of passengers and provisions.

Half a century ago, before the era of improvement and reform, a person who was born in Swanage frequently died there without going farther afield than Wareham or Poole, unless, of course, he were a sailor and acquainted with European ports. Wareham, the nearest market town, could only be reached by carrier's cart on three days of the week.

The fare being three shillings, few Swanagers availed themselves of the opportunity for travel and exploration. The cart, therefore, carried more merchandise than humanity. Indeed, this vehicle and a daily boat from Poole (weather permitting) supplied Swanage with all provisions but fish and vegetables. In those good old days Swanage people were called "Turks" by the worldly-wise inhabitants of Poole, on account of their ignorance of things in general and commerce in particular.

A story was told me by a retired builder who had lived in Swanage "man and boy for sixty years and more" which beautifully exemplifies the simplicity of his fellow-townsmen. A gentleman arrived with a large wooden box which he said was filled with nuggets of gold. Putting up at one of the inns, he pursued a socially triumphant career; the box which represented so much wealth secured for him popularity tempered with reverence. After a time he became engaged to one of the local beauties, and in honour of the happy event gave a dinner at his inn to all his friends and acquaintances. "All went merry as a marriage bell" until next day, when it was discovered that he had vanished, leaving behind him some unpaid bills and the wooden box, not of nuggets, but of stones!

If the Swanagers had not the wisdom of the serpent, they had the greater virtue, the courage of the lion. Countless numbers have risked and many have lost their lives in the attempt to save passengers and crews of ships wrecked on the adjacent rocks.

Swanage, as has been said, was in about the twelfth century divided into manors, each of which was encircled by a stone wall. Out of the original fourteen only four retain any

manorial semblance. Some have degenerated into mere farms, and others have vanished into red-brick and railways. However, as most of them, though lost to sight, are to memory dear, an imaginary journey round them may be interesting. This itinerary shall be made, like that of the Aryan tribes, from east to west, commencing at the north-east corner of Ballard Down, the great green hill that shelters Swanage from cold winds, and ending with the Prior of Frampton's lands, parts of which now belong to the almshouse at Wareham.

The building at the eastern end of Ballard Down is Whitecliff Farm, so called from the chalk cliff on its left. It is rather small, and is built of rubble stone. The fact that the "new wing" is dated 1683 points to the antiquity of the older parts of the building. Roman remains having been found in the vicinity, it is generally supposed that the farm is built on the site of a Roman villa. In *Domesday Book* Whitecliff is said to have been held by one Serlo de Burci. More than a century later the manor comes into prominence as being a favourite hunting-lodge of King John, who frequently stayed there. Since then oblivion has enveloped it, and it now belongs to Lord Eldon, who lets it as a farm.

A more attractive and romantic-looking demesne is the manor of Godlingston. The house is hidden in a clump of tall elm trees and flanked by immense farm buildings. It is long and low, is covered with dark ivy—a sombre note in the brightly flowering garden that surrounds it. At the western extremity there is a semicircular tower rising but a foot or two above the roof of the house. In turbulent times this was used as a tower of refuge ; it certainly was a tower of strength,



as its walls were enormously thick, its door four feet above the ground, and its window only two feet high and narrow in proportion. Though not mentioned in *Domesday Book*, Godlingston is thought to have been a part of Suuanwick, and therefore probably the property of the wife of Hugh Fitz Grip, and her descendants the de Lincolns, Govis, and Latimers. It certainly belonged to Alured de Talbot in Henry the Second's reign, from whose family it descended to the Rempstons. In the time of Edward IV, Isabel, the heiress of the Rempstons, married John Carent. From this period there is a gap in the history of the manor till 1687, when Henry Wells sold it to John Frampton, whose descendant sold it in 1765 to Henry Bankes, whose heir now owns it. The house was probably built in the tenth or eleventh century; a new wing was added in the sixteenth century, which in comparison with the older fabric is positively "jerry-built." The interior, which has only been slightly modernised with regard to comfort and convenience, still bears its old-world character, with narrow corridor and oak-beamed ceilings. A new window has been put in the tower, but the owls who have built in its drapery of ivy for centuries do not in the least object to the innovation; they seem rather to approve, as they make its embrasure a resting-place for their nests.

In the valley below Ballard Down lies the land that once was attached to the manor of Moulham. In Edward the Confessor's reign Moleham, as it was then called, was held by three thegns, who paid taxes to the extent of one hide. At the Conquest it came into new hands. The Rev. John Coker, the seventeenth-century historian of Dorset, gives

the following account of the installation of the new owner:—

“Not farre from Corfe is Moulham which King William the First gave to Durand, his carpenter, to be held by service, that he should repair the timber works of the great tower of Corfe Castle, and cleanse the gutters as often as need required.”

Durand's descendants took the name of Moulham from the place, and always found a carpenter to keep Corfe Castle in repair. In Henry the Fifth's reign there was no heir to Moulham, only an heiress, who by marrying Robert Rempston separated the name from the manor that originated it. John Mowlem, who flourished in the last half of the nineteenth century, believing himself to be descended from a collateral branch of the de Moulhams and having amassed a fortune, bought the property which once belonged to that family. He built on a good deal of the land, and amongst other things erected and gave to the town the Mowlem Institute, which is at once a library and a museum. At his death his great-nephew inherited the estate, and it is to his determination not to sell his land that the Swanagers are indebted for the green fields and downs that are between the old town and the new.

But the crowning glory of the Swanage manors is Newton. The original manor-house was probably built by a Saxon in early times; after the Conquest it became part of Rempston. In the reign of Mary it came into the possession of the Prior of St. John of Jerusalem. In 1597 the manor was bought by a Mr. Cockram, whose descendants held it to 1830, when it was sold to a farmer called Beaton. From then till Sir Charles Robinson bought it in 1873 its condition deteriorated im-

mensely. When Sir Charles came into possession he found the place had been used as a storehouse for farm produce, and not as a dwelling-house at all. Now all things are changed. The old barn has been converted into the dining-hall, hung with tapestry, adorned with armour and pictures, and has a wonderful Florentine fireplace. The corridors and drawing-room too are overflowing with pictures, carvings, mirrors, and tapestries. The house is surrounded by a beautiful garden, ornamented here and there with classic statues; amongst these are a Roman sarcophagus, an altar to Belenus from Aquileia, and a statue to Silvanus also from Aquileia. This last is visible from the road, and affords the drivers of brakes from Swanage an opportunity for wit. Owing to the somewhat hairy appearance of the statue it has been described as Esau, but a more classical Jehu has now renamed it "Ajax defying his mother-in-law."

The next manor that has to some extent survived the centuries is the manor of Swanage itself, sometimes called the Prior of Frampton's lands. It was part of the Countess of Boulogne's demesne, and from her passed to the Priory of Frampton. From Norman times to the eighteenth century it belonged either to the Church or the Crown. In 1701 it was bought by John Chapman, whose son Thomas built the manor-house which now forms part of the Victoria Hotel. In 1825 William Morton Pitt<sup>1</sup> bought the estate. Wishing to develop his new domain and improve the condition of the inhabitants, he established a herring fishery, which failed, encouraged straw-plait manufacture, which exists to this day, and turned the manor-house into a hotel. When the late Queen, then Princess Victoria, came to Swanage in 1835 she

<sup>1</sup> Cousin of the great minister.





GODLINGTON



was presented with an address and a bonnet of native manufacture. The Manor House Hotel, in her honour, was re-christened the Royal Victoria Hotel.

I have had the good fortune to meet Mrs. Blandford, sister of the Miss Bartlett who presented the bonnet to the late Queen, and so can give an account of the visit in practically the same words as it was described by an eye-witness.

It was only known on the previous day that the Princess would visit Swanage, and great anxiety was felt as to what could be presented to her. At last it was decided that as straw-plait manufacture was the chief local industry, a bonnet of that material should be given to the future Queen. The order was given to Miss Anna Story, the owner of the principal bonnet shop, who with her assistants sat up all night to make the presentation bonnet. The Rev. T. O. Bartlett, Rector of Swanage, the father of my informant, wrote the address, which he afterwards read to the Princess.

A regiment of yeomanry under Captain Bartlett, the old lady's brother, met the royal party at Wareham and escorted them to Swanage. The Princess and the Duchess of Kent were installed in the Manor House Hotel, and the elder Miss Bartlett was fetched to present the bonnet. Her mother was by her side, and, both feeling extremely nervous, they walked across the room to where Princess Victoria was standing by the side of her mother. Miss Bartlett presented the bonnet, and as the recipient appeared almost as nervous as the donor, the Duchess said in a very low voice, "Say thank you, Victoria." The Princess did so, and the Duchess added, "Thank you, she will certainly wear it." They stayed all night at Swanage and then went on to the Isle of Wight.

Mrs. Blandford also knew Miss Muloch (Mrs. Craik) intimately. The scene of *Agatha's Husband* is laid entirely in this locality, and Mrs. Blandford's cousin lives in the house in East Street, Wareham, where the fictitious Agatha passed so much of her married life.

Past the Grosvenor Hotel, with its sea-girt gardens, stands the clock tower, and beyond, Peveril Point, a triangular promontory, slopes gradually and stretches a long arm out into the Channel. This headland was once the property of the Abbey of Shaftesbury, but it now belongs to Lord Eldon. There is a coastguard station at the top of the hill with a small battery of cannon. It is said that the old battery prepared to receive the Spanish Armada was washed away by the sea.

On the other side of Peveril Point is the crescent-shaped bay of Durlleston; its southern promontory is surmounted by a castellated building that looks like a fortress. Its name, Durlleston Castle, coincides with its appearance, and they are alike deceptive—the imposing edifice is a restaurant. Between the castle and the sea stands the enormous stone globe on which, in bas-relief, is depicted the world. This edifying sphere is of Portland stone and weighs forty tons.

About a quarter of a mile of zigzag path, like a miniature Corniche road, lies between Durlleston Castle and Tilly Whim caves. These caves or quarries, which were probably excavated by the Romans, were worked in the early years of the nineteenth century by a man called Tilly, and as "whim" in the West Country signifies a machine for raising and lowering stone, it is not difficult to guess the derivation of the name. A steep and dark path leads from the cliff to a terrace covered

with huge boulders and small chips of stone, against which the sea dashes vehemently. Behind it are the caves,

mighty twin hollows where never the sunlight shall be,  
Deep sunk under imminent earth, and subdued to the stress of the sea.

In the caves of Tilly Whim the beautiful and the useful attributes of Swanage may be said to unite. The beds of stone have for more than a thousand years provided employment for the inhabitants, and the scenery here reaches the summit of its perfection.

Though the history of this quaint corner of Dorset is romantic and its scenery picturesque, it is from its stone quarries that it receives its world-wide renown.

The quarries of Purbeck are in the hands of the "Company of Marblers and Stone-cutters of the Isle of Purbeck," which was established at some far-away period, but as most of its original records were destroyed by fire in the seventeenth century, it is impossible to tell either when the quarries were first worked or when the Company was formed. The recent discovery of Purbeck marble in the excavation of a Roman town near Silchester proves that the quarries were worked in Roman times, and the fact that the pillars of Salisbury Cathedral are of the same material shows that quarrying flourished in Purbeck in the thirteenth century.

The Company of Marblers and Stone-cutters holds a court in the guild-hall of Corfe Castle every Shrove Tuesday. Four officers, two wardens and two stewards, control the finances and enforce the rules of the Company. Each member has a copy of the articles of agreement, dated 1651, "which are to be performed and kept . . . for the good and well-ordering of the Company." These rules set forth that no man



can be a quarryman unless his father has been a quarryman, and, further, that the character of an apprentice must be like that of Cæsar's wife, above suspicion, and his birth legitimate. One or two of the articles are amusing enough to quote, in spite of their antique orthography :—

“Sixly. That upon any acceptance of any apprentice into the Company he shall pay unto the Wardens, for the use of the Company, six shillings and eight pence, and one penny lofe and two pots of beare. . . .

“Seventhly. That every man of our Company, the Shrove Tuesday after his marridge, shall pay unto the Wardens for the benefitt of his company, twelfe pence, and the last married man to bring a ffoot ball, according to the custom of the Company.”

This last is enlarged in an edition of the articles issued in 1679. The football was to be kicked to Owre, and the lord of the manor was to receive “a present of one pound of pepper as an acknowledgement in order to preserve the Company's right to the way or passage to Owre Key according to the ancient and usual custom.”

This ceremony is still performed on Shrove Tuesday, although stone is no longer dispatched from Owre Quay.

The quarries, which are invisible from a little distance, are on the hill that bounds the southern side of the Swanage valley, and stretch from Tilly Whim to Langton, Worth, and Corfe Common. They are worked by man, aided by the useful horse, or, in some cases, by the harmless, necessary ass. As in earlier times the stone was exported by sea, the quarries nearest the coast were worked first. Now that the maritime has been superseded by the railway service, most of the

littoral quarries have been deserted, and Langton is now the quarriers' metropolis, so to speak. The last stone taken from Tilly Whim was that which was used for the fortification of Portsmouth. Until comparatively recent times the stone was conveyed from the quarries to the bankers or landing-stages on the backs of the quarrymen.

Wishing to examine the quarries with a seeing eye and an understanding heart, I arranged to explore them under the guidance of the ancient quarrier whose wife I have already mentioned. After climbing half-way up the hill and clambering over many stone walls, we arrived at the first quarry that my guide chose to exhibit. The first thing observed was a circular stone wall, perhaps ten or twelve feet high. In the centre of the enclosure there was a capstan with a chain and pole attached, to which was harnessed a donkey. Through an opening in the wall one could see an irregular flight of steps leading down by a precipitous descent to the mouth of the shaft, a yawning black hole below. In the quarry to which the shaft leads men dig out the stone with heavy iron rods, and with almost superhuman strength carry huge blocks of it to the foot of the shaft and place them on a small truck. This truck is attached to the chain which is fastened to the capstan, and the donkey walking round his little enclosure winds the chain upon the capstan and so draws up the truck.

My guide was greatly distressed that the quarry he had elected to show me was worked by a donkey. It did not show the gentle art of quarrying at its best, for the animal, though industrious and well-meaning, was by no means rapid in his movements. But it was the suggestion with regard to the power of steam that unlocked the vials of his wrath.



"Steam! It's because you see that donkey that you think of steam. We may be primitive in Swanage, but there's wisdom in it. You look here, it might be a bit quicker to have machinery, but think of the expense of setting it up. It would cost more than we should make in half a year. Now a pony—I had one that galloped round the capstan—is quite quick enough, and doesn't cost much to keep. Besides, when he's wound up the stone he can be harnessed to the truck and take it anywhere it's wanted. Give me a pony!"

Partly out of consideration for the feelings of "Edward," and partly from a thirst for knowledge, I changed the subject and asked about the quarrymen's charter. The long and fervid reply epitomised was as follows: At some remote period a charter was given to the quarriers, authorising any member of the Company, after obtaining permission from the landlord or agent, to dig a shaft and put up a capstan where he chose. This once done, the shaft belonged to the quarryman as long as he worked it and paid stone dues, not as freehold, but as a sort of perpetual leasehold. As agents frequently would give permission without the knowledge of the landlords, disagreements often ensued. A case which led to a lawsuit was fresh in the memory of my guide. A quarrier was told by the landlord to close his shaft, and as he refused to do so he was arrested, tried, and imprisoned for two years. For the honour of the quarrier's cause, my guide impressed upon me that the man was imprisoned for contempt of court, not because he had not a right to work his quarry.

Upon asking why the charter was never produced, I was told that there was no need, as the quarrymen were in possession. Such an action would apparently lack dignity.

Not being satisfied with my guide's account of the case, I determined to find whether there was in existence a charter granting the Company of Marblers the right to open and work quarries in the Island of Purbeck. The first person I saw was the wife of the man of whose imprisonment my guide had told me ; she assured me that about thirty years ago, when she was a very young girl, she saw the charter, which bore the sign-manual of Queen Anne, but that it was now lost. I then interviewed one of the wardens of the Company ; his opinion was that there had been a charter, but that it was destroyed in the fire at Corfe in the seventeenth century. He referred me to the solicitor who had acted for the quarryman in the lawsuit, in whose possession were all the papers of the Company of Marblers. At the lawyer's office I found :—

(1) The original articles of agreement of the Company of Marblers, dated March 3, 1551, and signed by a large number of quarrymen, those who could not write making strange hieroglyphics as their mark. The little pieces of parchment still form a fringe at the bottom of the deed, but the seals are gone.

(2) A copy of the same, unsigned, and dated March 3, 1651.

(3) An enlarged edition of the articles, having more signatures appended than the earlier one, and the seal of the Company of Marblers. This has an heraldic device, on a pale three roses slipped proper.

(4) An original agreement of the Company of Marblers to object to the payment for the examination of stone required by London buyers.

(5) A copy of the charter granted by Charles II to the

Borough of Corfe. This charter ratifies one granted by Elizabeth to Sir Christopher Hatton, the then lord of the manor of Corfe, and gives Sir John Bankes privileges formerly Hatton's. The charter begins, "Charles II by the grace of God King of England, etc. We have seen a charter or letters patent of the Lady Elizabeth . . . Queen of England."

Here we have a very important point: there probably was once a charter which gave the Company of Marblers the rights they claim, but this, if it ever existed, has been destroyed, possibly in the fire, and the quarrymen, seeing the copy of Charles the Second's charter to the borough, and reading the opening sentences, believed it to be a ratification of their own ancient charter. It is impossible to prove a negative, so one cannot say absolutely that the charter does not exist, but I am assured by the lawyer for the defence in the trial of February, 1904, that every effort was made to find the missing grant, without success. At the trial the defendants asked the Court to presume that the Company of Marblers is a "corporate body incorporated by a *lost* grant from the Crown."

All the papers of the Company of Marblers were kept in the guild-hall at Corfe till 1830, when they were removed to Swanage. From that time they were kept by one of the wardens of the Company until 1904, when they were handed over to the Company's solicitors at Poole.

In 1697 the Company of Marblers was converted into a joint stock company, but did not long remain on that footing.

An incident that occurred in 1859 shows how tenacious

the quarriers were of their customs. A person who was neither a freeman nor the son of a freeman was employed in a quarry at Swanage. The Company objected to his employment, and threatened to carry off five pounds' worth of stone from the stock of the delinquent. They would have been justified in doing this by their own law, but by no other, and the employer, realising that the Company was right, discharged the offending labourer.

At the present time the stone exported from Purbeck is only a fraction of what it once was. At one time no cathedral or building of importance was considered complete without columns, or at least some decoration, of Purbeck marble. When foreign stone became fashionable, great was the blow to the "Company of Marblers and Stone-cutters." The trade revived, however, when the war with France broke out at the end of the eighteenth century, as an immense amount of stone was required for fortification, but when peace was declared affairs became worse than ever. Many quarries were closed and a number of men thrown out of work; the poor rate was 13s. 4d. in the pound, and the poverty was so great that the men were unable to provide themselves with more than a crust for their midday meal. Something therefore had to be done, and as it appeared that by cheating the revenue of the duty on brandy and tobacco a livelihood could be gained, many entered into this illicit method of maintenance. Smuggling, however, was not unattended with danger and excitement, as a revenue cutter was stationed in the bay, and an officer of the Government quartered in the town, who, with pistols at his sides and a mounted escort at his heels, must have been as terrifying an individual as partisans of law and order could wish.



Many are the smuggling stories told in relation to the coasts of Purbeck, and one which is connected with Tilly Whim shall be transcribed from *Picturesque Rambles in the Isle of Purbeck*, by C. E. Robinson, Esq., M.A.:—

“In times before Free Trade, it is said that the coast near Swanage was a regular resort of smugglers, with whom many of the inhabitants had leagued themselves to cheat the revenue for the purpose of getting their grog cheap. One of the hiding-places for their illicit cargoes was a cave (Tilly Whim) in the cliff between Howcombe Quarry and Durlleston Head, to which there is no access except from the sea at low water. Hither would one of their fast-sailing luggers resort, when the revenue cruisers were out of the way, and in quiet, foggy weather quietly deposit the contraband goods, to be afterwards fetched away by the people of the town when a safe opportunity occurred. It happened one night, many years ago, that an unusually valuable cargo of brandy, in which half Swanage was interested, had been safely secreted in the smugglers’ cave, and burning to convey it to their hidden stores in the town . . . the confederates had given false information to the revenue officers, in the hope of leading them off elsewhere, and in the meantime landing the spirits. Unluckily the trick was only half successful. The revenue men were drawn away, it is true, but before they had gone far had received precise intelligence which brought them back in haste before the landing had been half accomplished. However, the smugglers had decamped in time, and for hours the hiding-place baffled all attempts to discover its locality. At last one of the officers, keener of nose than the rest, became accidentally aware of a strong smell of brandy near the edge of the cliff. He sniffed, he was not quite certain; he sniffed again and was positive; he went on his hands and knees, and sure enough the grass was damp with a mixture never of Nature’s distilling. He guessed on the instant that here the barrels had been hauled up, and one had been broken

and leaked on the ground. But even then the cave was a puzzle to find, and when entered at last it was quite empty! No, not quite though, for in one dark corner the officers could just espy a harmless little wooden buoy with a line attached. And the eyes of the astute guardian of the revenue were not more at fault than his nose, for when he pulled it up the little buoy proved to have attached to it quite a quantity of kegs of very excellent cognac. Nearly an entire cargo was confiscated on this occasion, and it proved a fine prize for the finder. The Swanage people were furious, and went so far as to mob the revenue station when most of the officers were away. However, no harm was done, for the appearance of one man with a cutlass put them to indiscriminate flight."

After having exhausted the quarries, I called upon Mr. William Hardy, a veteran builder, and also historian of Swanage. He is a wonderful old man, and has a fine collection of curios in his house, amongst them an old black-letter Bible, which belonged to one of his ancestors, and was dated 1617. Pride of descent is not the least conspicuous feature in the Swanagers. Mr. Hardy has for some sixty years spent his life in the study of his native town. Very kindly indeed he copied out for me some notes of his on the geology and antiquities of Swanage. To these notes I am indebted for the information in the following paragraphs.

The hill on the south side of Swanage abounds in relics of the past. When the playground of Durlleston Court School was made, a tumulus fifty feet in circumference and ten feet deep was destroyed, and near Belle Vue, a hundred yards to the east, four or five skeletons were found in a radius of twelve feet. A number of cistvaens containing skeletons were found near. As the ancient Britons used cistvaens for burying purposes, their discovery and also that of a number



of Romano-British pieces of pottery and Roman coins prove that at and before the time of Cæsar's occupation this was a place of importance.

As Wareham was first a British and then a Roman fortified town, it is most probable that this hill with its expansive view of sea and land was the site of a signal station. It would be quite easy to signal maritime danger across the downs.

Mr. Hardy finds also geological evidence of an early British occupation.

### CHAPTER III

#### LANGTON MATRAVERS, LANGTON WALLIS, WORTH MATRAVERS, ST. ALDHELM'S HEAD

"For all the radiant rocks from depth to height  
Burn with vast bloom of glories blossom-bright  
As though the sun's own hand had thrilled them through with light."

SWINBURNE.

**A**FTER the attractions of Swanage have been exhausted, the peregrinator of Purbeck should climb again the steep hill of the High Street, and going westward, traverse the old Corfe road, which leads past Newton Manor and Herston to Leeson Park and Langton Matravers.

Herston, a row of grey cottages nearly at the top of a hill, is in these days hardly worthy to be styled a village. Its only noticeable building is St. Mark's Church, and this, to use an Irishism, is only noticeable through its insignificance. It is a small, flat building, and terminates a row of cottages, its roof being about on a level with the first-floor rooms.

Herston derives its name from "Her," a Saxon who held this part of Purbeck in Edward the Confessor's time. In *Domesday Book* it is called Herestone, and described as the property of Roger Arundel, lord of the manor of Worth.

Later it formed part of the manor of Langton, and now it is the property of Lord Eldon.

The road still winds in an upward direction. It is the kind of road that leads one to expect that it will go downhill after the next corner is turned, but it is a deceptive and delusive road, for after the corner is turned the hill invariably becomes steeper.

About a mile and a half beyond Herston are the few grey cottages interspersed with wind-blown trees which form the village of Leeson. The situation is truly a bleak one. On the left Leeson Park, as if to demonstrate the class differences of a past age, nestles snugly in a grove of trees. A long drive leads through fields and a garden brilliant with flowers to the large Gothic mansion which was built on the site of the old manor-house.

Leeson appears originally to have belonged to the manor of Langton Matravers. Its earliest owners known to history were the Clavells. The first, William Clavell, of Leeson, or Lesterton, was twice on a jury in Edward the First's reign, and the last, Walter Clavell, of Leeson, signed a charter in Henry the Sixth's reign. After a long interval Leeson came into the hands of a family called Checkford. In 1723 it was bought by a member of the Archer family. In 1816 George Garland, Esq., bought the estate and greatly embellished the house by decorating it with some magnificent oak carving which he had brought from Belgium. It is now the property of Lord Eldon, from whom it is rented by Miss Knight for her school.

Another half-mile of the ever-ascending road, one short, steep descent, one more climb, and Langton is reached.



ST. ALDHELM'S HEAD FROM KIMMERIDGE BAY



DANCING LEDGE, LANGTON MATRAVERS



It is perched on the top of a hill that every wind of heaven sweeps. The salient points are the church, the rectory, and, last but not least, Durnford House. For the rest it comprises a ribbon of grey cottages enlivened with shops and inns.

There are two Langstones mentioned in *Domesday Book*, but as the first is most probably to be identified with Langton Herring, near Abbotsbury, it is in no way connected with Purbeck. The second, which is called Langeat in the *Exeter Domesday*, is without doubt West Langton, known to the world since the thirteenth century as Langton Wallis or Walleys.

The portion of land now known as Langton Matravers does not correspond with any described in *Domesday Book*. It is mentioned in Henry the Third's reign as belonging to Matthew Skelling and Margaret his wife, and appears to have been inherited by the latter, though from whom history does not state. In 1250 Mr. and Mrs. Skelling "conveyed" two carucates of land (a carucate is as much land as a team can plough in a year) and the advowson of a church to Roger Waspail and his heirs, receiving as rent a pair of gilt spurs or sixpence every Easter.

Roger was rather an important person, being possessed of lands in several counties, and in 1261 was appointed justiciary of Ireland during the absence of Rohill. Early in Edward the First's reign he sold the manors of Langton and Wychampton to John Mautrauers for a hundred marks of silver.

John Mautrauers died in 1296, and was succeeded by his son John (called Sir John Matravers, senior), who is renowned as having been one of the murderers of Edward II. He



seems to have found favour in the eyes of Edward III, for he was commanded to hunt "in the time of buck-hunting at Carisbroke, in the Isle of Wight, at the King's cost, the first day with his horses, the following days while he is here with the King's horses and all other charge." He died in 1365, and, as his son who predeceased him left no heir, his lands were divided between his two granddaughters. Langton, now called Langton Matravers, fell to Eleanor, the younger, who was the wife of Sir John Arundel; thus it was that it eventually came to the Earls of Arundel. The last Earl of this branch sold it to a certain William Gyll in 1561, whose descendants held it for about half a century. Later it was probably held by the Erles of Charminster. Sir Walter Erle evidently owned the advowson of Langton Church in the seventeenth century, as he appointed the clergy. After them come the Trenchards, and in 1802 the Rev. J. Dampier, who sold it to George Garland, M.P., whose son sold it to the first Earl of Eldon.

The church, though it is at the western extremity of the old manor of Langton, is really nearly in the centre of the village. It has one great peculiarity, its roof is considerably higher than its tower, the reason for this being that the tower is old (it is said that it has outlived three churches) and the rest of the church is new; an increased population required a more roomy building, so the body outgrew the tower. The present nave, chancel, and porch were built in 1828, and recently the whole church has been thoroughly strengthened and renovated. The rectory, which is close by, contains one particular object of interest, a priest's oven. This is a niche in the wall of the dining-room with a small cavity on the

right-hand side. Fuel was put in the cavity and an iron sheet placed in front. When the iron was hot the dough was put in the niche to be baked. It is supposed that this oven was only used for bread that was to be consecrated.

By far the most imposing building in Langton is Durnford House. It was probably the residence of the lords of the manor when they visited their Purbeck estates. It was certainly the residence of the Sir John Matravers, "that blemish of knighthood," as he is called by the old chronicler, who assisted in the murder of Edward II.

The first time Durnford in Purbeck is mentioned in history is when William de Durnford "enfeoffed Robert Walrond of the manor of Stodlaunde" in the third year of Edward the First's reign. After the direct line of Durnford was extinct their property came through a daughter of the house to the Percys of Shaftesbury. The lands were held later by the Mompessons, from whom Samuel Serrel of Combe Keynes bought them in 1721. In 1859 the widow of the last of the Serrels, Frances, daughter of the Rev. Edward Banks and his first wife the Lady Frances Scott, became mistress of Durnford manor. The house now belongs to Mr. and Mrs. Pellatt, who have converted it into a boys' school.

In looking at the insignificant village of Langton, it seems surprising that it is all that is left of two manors which for six centuries were places of importance held by men of distinction. Langton Wallis had even a longer record than Langton Matravers. It is, as has already been said, mentioned in the *Exeter Domesday Book*. At that time it belonged to the wife of Hugh Fitz Grip. From her it descended to

Alured de Lincoln, who, dying without children, left his land to be divided between his sisters and coheirs. His youngest sister, Albreda, inherited West Langton, and did homage to Henry III for it in 1264. In the name of Albreda de Nicholl (another reading of Lincoln) she granted the manor of Langton for the sum of £100 sterling to Ingelram de Walleys, Walshe, or Wallis, from whom it took its second name.

In 1276, the year of the purchase, Ingelram went to law with Elias de Rabayne, constable of the King's Castle of Corfe. Elias, having asserted his right to a certain wood of Ingelram's, cut down and burnt his trees, imprisoned and fined his tenants, and generally injured his property. One hopes that Ingelram won his case, though historians do not say how the suit ended. But as they do say that in 1277 Ingram or Ingelram de Walleys held only one-fourth of the inheritance of Alured de Lincoln, we fear that Elias the aggressive was victorious. Later, Ingram was returned as member for Somerset and Dorset, and on numerous occasions he "performed military service in person in parts beyond the seas." In 1277 he fought for the King against Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, and in 1301 against the Scots. He died in 1304, and was succeeded by his son Sir John, who also was member for Somerset and Dorset, and served the King in his wars with Scotland. Before his death he made over his lands in Purbeck to his son Roger.

After Roger's death, his daughter Margaret, wife of John Filiol, and his granddaughter Johanna, wife of Fontleroy, each claimed the property, and a lawsuit ensued. After about twenty years' controversy it was decided amicably, the Fontleroyes letting the Filiols have the manor of Langton

“subject to the rent of a rose at the Nativity of St. John the Baptist.” Sir William Filiol alienated it to John Trenchard; however, in spite of the alienation it was inherited at Sir William Filiol's death in 1528 by his eldest daughter Anne, the wife of Sir Edward Willoughby, whose descendant Sir Francis sold it in 1585 to Sir Christopher Hatton, the Lord Chancellor, for £3000. Sir Christopher's widow Elizabeth married Sir Edward Coke and sold the estate to Sir John Bankes, knight, Chief Justice of England, to whose descendant it still belongs.

Near Langton—indeed part of it—is a hamlet called Wilkswood. In early Norman times it belonged, with most of the land in the neighbourhood, to the wife of Hugh Fitz Grip. At an early date it was incorporated with Langton Wallis. There was once a priory there which was founded by Alice, the wife of Ingelram de Walleys. Roger Walleys augmented its revenue in 1319, and it was suppressed in Henry the Eighth's reign. In 1585 Wilkswood was occupied by the Havellands, a branch of the Guernsey family of that name, and from 1585 on till the middle of the eighteenth century. It now belongs to Mr. Bankes.

Another hamlet, Acton, Tacatone in *Domesday Book*, was comprised in the manor of Langton Wallis, and was contained in the conveyance of the manor to Sir Christopher Hatton. It now forms the heart of the quarry district.

Knighton once belonged to the manor of Godlingston, and was held in succession by the Talbots and Clavells. It also is now owned by Mr. Bankes.

Mr. William Hardy, in his booklet *Smuggling Days in Purbeck*, tells us that in about 1830, nearly all their secret



store-houses having been discovered by the coastguards, the smugglers of Langton used the space between the ceiling and the apex of the roof of the parish church as a hiding-place for their barrels of contraband brandy.

On one occasion, when a cargo of "tubs" had been safely landed at Dancing Ledge, the smugglers found that, owing to the absence of several of their company, it would be impossible to get it into the church that night. The question at once arose as to where they could safely conceal it. One of their number, a farm-labourer, suggested that it should be hidden in an adjacent barn, where dwelt a furious bull; if this bull were let out, no man, woman, or child would venture near. The others approved of this plan, and the treasure was left, as Mr. Hardy remarks, "in the custody of 'John Bull.'" The bovine guardian proved worthy of the trust reposed in him, and on the following night the tubs were safely removed to the church. A few weeks later, to the dismay of the smugglers, the chief custom-house officer found the casks and promptly confiscated them. It was thought that one of the pirate band, over-persuaded by offers of "filthy lucre," had betrayed his comrades.

About a mile beyond Langton a gate on the left leads to the road to Worth. Quarries are clustered thickly for the first half-mile on the right-hand side; on the left there is an expanse of downs stretching towards the sea; in front St. Aldhelm's Head looks like a vast wedge cleaving the waters asunder, and at its far-off point one can see the square little chapel dedicated to the great bishop from whom the promontory takes its name. The view is very fine indeed from this road: on the south one can see across downs and inlets



Worth Matravers JWG B

WORTH MATRAVERS





to Swyre Head, and on the north across the heather and gorse to the Purbeck Hills and Poole Harbour. After about a mile the road begins to descend rapidly. The first sign of an inhabited region is a small Wesleyan chapel. When this is passed, the village, partly hidden by its surrounding trees, comes in sight. The aspect is bleak and the situation difficult of access, and one wonders how it was that in distant days Worth took precedence of Swanage in dignity and importance. Mr. Robinson suggests that it may have been these very disabilities that made the old Saxons who first built the village choose this inauspicious site.

The church of Worth, dedicated to St. Nicholas, is the oldest in the island, and also claims some distinction from having for a long time been the mother-church of Swanage. As has been previously mentioned, it was probably the scene of a miracle, the account of which I will repeat. While waiting at a place near Wareham for the sea to calm, Aldhelm, then Abbot of Malmesbury, desired that a church should be built in which he and his followers could pray for a safe journey across the Channel, and though this church either never had, or else lost its roof, not a drop of rain ever fell within its walls. Several places have been suggested as the site of this chapel. The Bishop of Bristol thinks the ancient chapel in Corfe Castle was the identical building. Mr. Wildman, in his *Life of St. Aldhelm*, takes William of Malmesbury's "*Locus est in Dorsetensi pago ii milibus a mari iuxta, ubi et Corf Castellum pelago prominet,*" to mean that the church was near Wareham, and near, not in, Corfe. Mr. Shepherd, Vicar of Worth, believes that the walls of Worth Church were built by the followers of the saint. Mr.

Shepherd's reasons for his opinion shall be given in his own words :—

"My reasons for supposing that our church is 'the Miraculous Chapel' are :—

"1. The architecture—Saxon. Though the Saxon character is almost lost in the Norman additions, yet the blocked-up doorway is certainly Saxon, and the dimensions of the area are the '3 to 1'—a decidedly Saxon characteristic.

"2. The aforesaid Saxon work is of Early Saxon date—corresponding to the days of St. Aldhelm. The added Norman is of Late Norman date—corresponding to the time of William of Malmesbury, by whose endeavours the 'chapel' was finished. There is no Early Norman work. The conclusion being that the building was commenced in (*circa*) 700 and left untouched till William of Malmesbury's day.

"3. William of Malmesbury states that the chapel was 'two miles from the port.' In this parish there is a little bay 'Chapman's Pool'; it was formerly called 'Shipman's Pool'; possibly it is the same word as 'Chepe' in 'Cheapside.' This Bay is doubtless the old port (it is used now by the fishermen), and the church is just the 'two miles' from it. If the St. Aldhelm's Chapel is the one at Corfe, one must allow a great deal for alterations in land, the distance to the 'port' (in Poole Harbour) being about four miles. Corfe Chapel is also more carefully built, not in the rough way which the legend supposes."

It is a small church of simple structure, and the rubble stone of which it is built conveys an impression of great age, and the three-storied square tower looks as if it bore the weight of many centuries.

The only ornamentation on the outside is a course of projecting stones, rudely carved with grotesque heads, which runs under the eaves of the nave roof and over the belfry windows

in the tower. An extraordinary buttress supports the north wall ; it is divided about half-way down to admit of the large door. It is thought that the tenth-century architect, wishing to renovate the church in the Norman style with large doors in the north and south sides of the nave, resorted to this plan in order to gain the necessary strength and symmetry. On the south side there is a deep hagioscope which led into a chapel. This chapel was pulled down in the eighteenth century, and the stones were used to build the south porch. The south doorway is decorated with Norman diamond mouldings and a semicircular tympanum with a design in bas-relief—all this was purposely destroyed by Cromwell's soldiers, who were in the neighbourhood for about six months. As in those days there was no porch to guard the doorway, the soldiers amused themselves by shooting at the carving above it.

Inside the church the arch dividing the nave and chancel is an excellent specimen of Norman architecture ; on the south is an old Saxon doorway, now blocked up. Inside the altar-rail there are several old stone coffins—these tend to prove that there were people of consequence living in this isolated spot in long past days. It was a sign of wealth and greatness to be laid in one's last resting-place in a coffin ! The commonalty were just placed in the earth in all simplicity. An old black-stone coffin was dug up recently—it might have proved interesting had not the people pounced upon it and broken it up for fuel !

There is a tombstone in the churchyard bearing the following inscription :—

“Sacred to the memory of Benjamin Jesty of Downshay, who departed this life April 16th 1816 aged 70 years. He

was born at Yetminster in this county and was an upright honest man; particularly noted for having been the first person (known) that introduced the cow-pox by inoculation, and who from his strength of mind made the experiment from the cow on his wife and two sons in the year 1774."

Three years before the great Jenner this unknown farmer of Downshay in the parish of Worth made the discovery that was to defend humanity from one of the most horrible diseases that flesh is heir to.

In the paper on Worth read by the Rev. F. F. Tracy before the Purbeck Society in February, 1860, the following letter from the Rev. J. M. Colson, of Swanage, concerning Jesty is quoted:—

"February 16th, 1860.

"My dear Sir,

"I have a perfect recollection of old Jesty coming to our house at Corfe, the one now inhabited by Mr. Bradley, to borrow of my father a pair of saddle-bags—to contain his clean shirts when he was going to London to give evidence on his discovery of Vaccination—and being vice the saddle-bags (a thing of bygone ages, now quite an extinctum genus) supplied with a portmanteau as the more convenient vehicle.

"On his return he gave a very unfavourable report of the metropolis, but *per contra* said there was one great comfort there indeed, viz. that he could be shaved *every day* instead of wearing his beard from Saturday to Saturday, on which day alone when he rode into Wareham market was he relieved of that *encumbrance* (as it was *then* thought, now *tempora mutantur*).

"I cannot precisely date this event. He lived at Corfe from May, 1800, till October, 1810, and my belief is that it must have been about 1806 or 1807. Some years before this he had lived at a farm in the neighbourhood of Cerne,



in this county (Dorset), and there he first practised vaccination on his own children. Fever ran high with his patients, and he called in Mr. Trowbridge, the medical man at Cerne (whom I full well remember in later years when *we* lived near that place), and told him what he had done.

"Trowbridge said, 'You have done a bold thing, but I will get you through if I can,' treated it as a fever, and was successful. I should have said that old Jesty, not being equipped with a lancet, performed the operation with a stocking-needle!! . . .

"Believe me truly yours,      "J. M. COLSON."

The hills to the east of Worth are curiously terraced—rather like the hillsides in the Riviera, but the terraces are wider. Some ascribe these to an attempt to improve the soil by letting the better part of it silt down in order to give the crops some sustenance; some state that they show the boundaries of allotments; and others regard them as the remains of a British fortification.

Worth, like most of the isolated villages in Dorset, has a long historical record. Its name proclaims it to be of Saxon origin; the Anglo-Saxon equivalent for "Worth," according to Hutchins, signifies either "dwelling" or "shore." As Worth is near the sea, the latter interpretation most probably gives the village its name.

In *Domesday Book* it is said to have been divided into three parts—Wrde, Orde, and Wirde. The two first "parcels" belonged, like West Langton, to Alured de Lincoln, and were held of him by Roger Arundel. Wirde was held by that great lady of Purbeck, Dame Fitz Grip. Wrde and Orde were but small holdings, but Wirde probably comprised a part of Swanage.



Coker describes Worth as "the nomenall place, if I mistake not, of the ancient family of Worthe or Worth, who derived their descent from an heire generall of Sir William Burghe, of Burgh Court, Gloucestershire, and remained long in the good esteem of this county."

Hutchins comments that if this is correct the family must have been seated there very early. In 1212 Worth and the advowson of the chapel of Swanage, which belonged to Worth rectory, became the property of the Fitz-Paynes. In Edward the Third's reign the widow of Robert Fitz-Payne alienated it to John de Vere, Earl of Oxford. Soon after this it passed to the Matravers family, from whom, like East Langton, it derived its distinctive appellation. With East Langton it eventually fell to the Earls of Arundel. The barony of Matravers was created in the fifteenth century, John Arundel being the first peer. In Elizabeth's reign it was alienated to the Dollings, and was sold in 1674 by the husband of one of the daughters of the house, John Pyke, to John Calcraft, from whom it descended to Captain Marsden, R.N.

There are several hamlets and farms in the manor of Worth that are of historic interest. The most important of the latter is Downshay. It is situated about two miles north-east of Worth. Surrounded by innumerable fields, it is reached by a rough path just wide enough to admit of a cart. One end of this flower-girt lane is in the old Corfe road, the other in the newer road through the valley. The house is of stone, and on the south the wall is upheld by three massive buttresses. All the walls are of a tremendous thickness, and the ceilings have heavy oak beams. The present building is said to be on the site of the ancient house of the Matraverses.

One can easily imagine the freebooting knights of feudal times guarding it at the sword's point, here it is so possible to believe oneself to be living in the tenth or eleventh century, and one would not be at all surprised at the advent of a long-haired Saxon in sheepskin or a Norman knight in armour. Though the present house was built in 1642, and the ancient house has vanished for ever, the surrounding valley is just the same ; then, as now,

The birds chant melody on every bush,  
The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind  
And make a chequered shadow on the ground.

After the Matraverses and Arundels, Downshay, like Worth, fell to the Dollings and Calcrafts. It now belongs to Captain Marsden.

Among the adjacent farms and hamlets are Woodyhide, which once belonged to Godlingston, a pale grey pile in a setting of green fields ; Quarr, the site of an old quarry from Edward the First's days, occupied by the Clavells ; Rentscombe, a farm by the sea, which was Church property till the Dissolution, when, with its patronal abbey, it fell to the Crown. In 1541 Henry VIII granted it to Thomas Arundel and his heirs "to be held of the King in chief for a knight's service." Thomas Arundel was attainted in Edward the Sixth's reign, and Rentscombe was granted to Lord Fitz-Warren, from whom it passed to the Wells family, who held it till 1763, when it was bought by George Cary, whose son sold it to Mr. Jenkins, "a dancing-master of London" ; Mr. Jenkins, evidently thinking his terpsichorean talents were wasted on the desert air of Rentscombe, sold it in the same year to the first Lord Eldon.

From Worth one path leads through the valley called Bottom to the sea, and another over the hills to the "terrible steep" cliff known as St. Aldhelm's Head, the most southerly promontory in Purbeck. From the extreme point there is a most magnificent view: to the east the various bays and headlands towards Hengistbury Head, and beyond, the western opening of the Solent with the clear-cut white cliffs of the Isle of Wight; westward a more rugged coast-line reveals itself, culminating in the steep rock of Portland, which starts straight up from the sea; to the south the sea and vast illimitable space. The promontory itself is rugged and majestic, showing an unflinching front to the fury of the sea.

About fifty paces from the point of the promontory stands the little Norman church dedicated to St. Aldhelm. One of the oldest small churches in England, it is only about thirty feet square, and, contrary to custom, the lines of the building do not run due east and west, north and south, with the altar at the east end, but the wall behind the altar faces S.S.E. The walls, which are built of rubble stone, are three feet thick and strengthened by buttresses; the vaulted stone roof, low and slightly pyramidal, is supported by arches which spring from a central pillar. There is a superstition connected with the pillar to the effect that if a pin is put in a certain hole while a wish is mentally registered, the wish will be fulfilled.

On the top of the roof, in the middle, there is a circular stone. Several theories are held as to its significance, the most probable being that it was either the plinth of a cross or the basis of a beacon, for in ancient days a light was always kept burning on the point, and the priest who prayed

for the safety of sailors also trimmed the light that was to guide them into security.

There is a pathetic legend concerning the erection of this chapel. A bride and bridegroom were sailing round the head, and the bride's father was watching their progress. Suddenly the boat capsized, and its occupants were plunged into the sea. They were both drowned, the old man being unable to procure any assistance. He is said to have built the church to their memory, and desired that a light should always be kept burning to defend mariners from at least some of the perils of the dangerous coast. This is supposed to have happened in 1140. Some historians, disregarding the legend, assert that the chapel was probably built by King John, who spent a good deal of time in Purbeck. It is quite possible, however, that the father of the drowned girl began the church and the King finished it. In Henry the Third's reign the priest who served there ranked as a royal chaplain and received his stipend, fifty shillings a year, from the Crown through the sheriff of the county. In Henry the Sixth's reign the priest of the chapel of St. Aldhelm is mentioned as taxed at twenty shillings, but there were neither congregation nor inhabitants! Hutchins suggests that it was probably only a chantry, where masses were said for the benefit of mariners who passed this shore and left alms or gratuity at the first port they touched for the maintenance of the priest. The historian must have been unaware that the priest was a salaried officer of the Crown!

It is not exactly known when service ceased to be held in the chapel, but it was desecrated for a great many years—used as a store-house, and at times even as a stable. In



1873, however, Lord Eldon restored it, and now it is in the cure of the Vicar of Worth, who holds service there on Sunday afternoons.

The only places considered worthy of nomenclature between Anvil Point and St. Aldhelm's Head are Dancing Ledge, Seacombe, and Winspit. The first, so called from the way in which the waves dance on the terrace of rock, is chiefly renowned for the part it took in smuggling transactions. The two last were once quarrying centres, but they are deserted, and their claims to notice are of an æsthetic and not utilitarian character now. The coast between them was on January 6th, 1796, the scene of a terrible wreck. The *Halsewell*, an East Indiaman, was bound from London to Bengal. A storm arose soon after she left the mouth of the Thames, and when passing Dunnose, in the Isle of Wight, she sprang a leak. With water seven feet deep, and shattered sails, she became unmanageable, and when St. Aldhelm's Head was sighted, the captain (Captain Richard Pierce, the oldest captain in the Company's service) essayed to anchor. The attempt proved futile, and the vessel struck on the rocks and was dashed to pieces. One hundred and sixty-eight persons were drowned, and, chiefly owing to the exertions of the quarrymen, eighty-two saved. The Worth parish register tells how the villagers were rewarded by the East India Company with a present of £100.

The quarry near which the ship went down is now called Halsewell Quarry. Charles Dickens was so impressed with the story of this wreck, which was told to him in his early youth, that he graphically described the tragedy in "The Long Voyage" in *Reprinted Pieces*.



Chapman's Pool INGB

CHAPMAN'S POOL





## CHAPTER IV

### ENCOMBE, KINGSTON, KIMMERIDGE, AND SMEDMORE

“A green circular hollow in the heath  
Which borders the seashore—a country path  
Creeps over it from the till'd fields behind.  
The hollow's grassy banks are soft inclined.”

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

THE way to Chapman's or Shipman's Pool leads through Rentscombe farm-yard and winds down a steep hill to a valley called Bottom. There is a Stygian prefix attached to the name of this valley that it is unnecessary to mention; it is sufficient to say that it was probably affixed on account of the malevolent manner in which the inhabitants treated shipwrecked mariners.

The way from here to Encombe, Lord Eldon's seat, repasses Worth and skirts Kingston. The house, which is built in the Italian style, is of Purbeck stone, quarried on the estate, and lies at the bottom of a “punch-bowl” shaped valley entirely surrounded by a grove of trees. On the summit of the hill, on the west side of the valley, there is an obelisk raised to the memory of Baron Stowell, the first Earl of Eldon's brother.

The name Encombe seems to be derived from the British word “en-cwm,” for in Spuwell's *Welsh Dictionary* “cwm” is a hollow between two hills—a dale or dingle—and “en” an

enhancing prefix. As Encombe is a large and cup-shaped valley, no name could be more appropriate to it.

Encombe is not mentioned by name in *Domesday Book*, as it was a part of the manor of Kingston, which belonged to the Abbey of Shaftesbury. King Edred, Edward the Elder's son and Dunstan's friend, gave it and the lands which afterwards formed the manor of Kingston to "a certain religeous woman called Ælfryth," who was probably Abbess of Shaftesbury. No more is known to be recorded of Encombe till Edward the First's reign, when it is stated in Kirby's *Inquest* that the Abbess of Shaston (Shaftesbury) held "the vills of Encombe and Harn of the King *in capite* as part of her barony." When leasing this property the Abbess reserved to herself the right to feed a number of sheep there. Until the Dissolution, however, Encombe was little more than an unenclosed sheep run.

In 1541, the thirty-second year of Henry the Eighth's reign, when most of the Church lands had been seized by the Crown, the valley of Encombe, called from its fertility "the Golden Bowl," was granted to Lord Zouche, who in the same year alienated it to Sir Thomas Arundel, sheriff of Dorset, who was afterwards imprisoned for alleged implication in the Cornish rising, and eventually executed for having taken part in Somerset's conspiracy. On Sir Thomas's attainder in Edward the Sixth's reign, the estate was granted to Lord Fitzwarren, who at once sold it to Robert Culliford for the stupendous sum of eleven guineas! As it was stated in the marriage settlement of Margaret, widow of Sir Thomas Arundel, that Encombe should be her jointure, Robert Culliford granted it to her for her life. At her death it became the seat of the Cullifords,

whose property it continued to be for several generations. It was sold by Jacob Bankes and George Trenchard, trustees of William Culliford, a minor, on April 19th, 1734, to George Pitt, of Stratfield Saye, near Southampton, who settled it on his younger son, John Pitt, M.P. for the boroughs of Wareham and Dorchester; his son William Morton Pitt, to whom reference has been made in the chapter on Swanage, sold the manor of Encombe to John Scott, the first Earl of Eldon and Lord Chancellor of England.

As the Earl of Eldon, Mr. Bond and Mr. Bankes are now the chief landowners in Purbeck, and Mr. Weld owns Lulworth, of which an account will be given, it will be interesting to give brief sketches of their family histories, and it is appropriate that the record of the House of Eldon should be given here.

John Scott, first Earl of Eldon, was the eighth son of William Scott, a coal-fitter of Newcastle.

There are various theories as to the ancestry of the family, one claiming for them descent from Sir Michael Scott, Astrologer Royal to the Emperor Frederick II, of whom Dante speaks in his *Inferno*—

That other who fills up a little space,  
Was Michael Scot, who veritably knew  
Of cheating magic every secret grace—

and whom Sir Walter Scott describes in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*—

In these far climes it was my lot  
To meet the wondrous Michael Scott,  
A wizard of such dreadful fame,  
That when, in Salamanca's cave,  
Him listed his magic wand to wave,  
The bells would ring in Notre Dame.

Another and more probable theory gives Duns Scotus as a possible forefather. Mr. Surtees, the first Earl's father-in-law, however, can trace no farther back than to his grandfather, William Scott, of Sandgate, who is said to have been clerk to a coal-fitter. Which of these pedigrees may be right is really of very little importance, for, as Voltaire says, "Whoever serves his country well has no need of ancestry," and Lord Eldon served his country so well and gained so much honour that it does not matter whether his family was founded by the astrologer, the philosopher, or the coal-fitter. It is enough that it was refounded by him. His father, who eventually amassed a large fortune and received the freedom of the city of Newcastle, married the daughter of a Mr. Atkinson of that city, and had thirteen children, of whom William, afterwards Lord Stowell, was the fourth, and John, Lord Eldon, the eighth. It is a remarkable fact that each of these celebrated men had a twin sister.

Lord Campbell, in his *Lives of the Chancellors*, says: "Mrs. Scott was a woman who was a model of all the domestic virtues, and of such superior understanding that to her is traced the extraordinary talent which distinguished her two sons William and John."

William was born in 1745 in the county of Durham, Mrs. Scott having gone there to avoid the probable bombardment of Newcastle by "Bonnie Prince Charlie." This fact is of importance, because, having been born in that county, William was able to obtain the Durham scholarship at Corpus Christi, and afterwards a Durham fellowship at University College. Lord Eldon used to say that, though he and his brother had served the Throne all their lives, they had gained everything from the Rebellion!



John was born in Newcastle in 1751 on June 4th, George the Third's birthday. He was sent to the chief grammar school in the town, but did not do anything in the least remarkable, a good memory being his best point. When he was sixteen his father wished to put him into the coal-fitter trade, but his brother William fortunately intervened and prevailed upon their father to send John to Oxford. On May 15th, 1766, therefore, John Scott entered University College with the intention of becoming in the fullness of time a clergyman. In 1767 he became a Fellow of his College, in 1773 took his B.A., and next year won the prize for the English Essay, returning home "with the vine leaves in his hair."

He was a good-looking young man, and fond of the society of ladies, but, in spite of frequent attendance at parties, he saw Miss Surtees, his "dear Bessie," the one love of his life, in a little country church at Sedgefield. He fell in love with her at first sight, and she seems to have reciprocated the emotion, for, in spite of the strong disapproval of both their parents, she consented to run away with him. On the night of November 18th, 1772, with the aid of a friend and a ladder, John Scott and Elizabeth Surtees were enabled to steal away and take a post-chaise to Blackshields, where they were married early next morning by the Rev. Mr. Buchanan.

Though Mr. Scott, senior, was annoyed at his son's early marriage, blighting his prospects as it did by causing him to lose his fellowship, he soon forgave the romantic pair and gave them £2000. With this they set up housekeeping, and John took pupils. After a time Mr. Surtees, hearing of his daughter's great distress at his sternness, forgave her,

and so domestically all went well. About this time John Scott took his M.A. degree. No college living having been offered, he decided to give up his idea of taking Holy Orders and began to study law instead. In February, 1776, he was called to the Bar.

He at once settled in London, but did not meet with conspicuous success till his brilliant argument in the case *Ackroyd v. Smithson* in 1780 gained him the applause of the bench. From that time he rose rapidly. In 1783 he took silk; in the same year he entered Parliament as member for Weobley and joined Pitt's party. In 1784 he became Solicitor-General; in 1788 he sided with Pitt in the opinion that Parliament had the right to choose a regent during George the Third's illness, and that that position was then not the positive right of the Prince of Wales. Hearing of this on his recovery, the King was pleased, and in consequence knighted his Solicitor-General. In 1793 Sir John became Attorney-General, and six years later Chief Justice of Common Pleas, when he was raised to the Peerage as Baron Eldon. He received the Great Seal and took his seat on the Woolsack in 1801.

He firmly opposed the Catholic Emancipation Bill, and took up his position as a pillar of Protestantism, which attitude he maintained till his death.

Though the Government changed in 1804, Lord Eldon still remained in office as Chancellor; but upon the death of Pitt, in 1806, he gave up the Great Seal. In speaking of his interview with George III in connection with giving up the Great Seal, Lord Eldon says: "The King . . . looking up suddenly, exclaimed, 'Lay it down on the sofa, for I can-

not and I will not take it from you. Yet I admit you can't stay when all the rest have run away.'"

While out of office Lord Eldon became intimate with the unfortunate Caroline of Brunswick, Princess of Wales, and, indeed, advised her in some of her earlier dissensions with the Prince. Subsequently, when George IV was on the throne, the Chancellor was constrained to reverse his policy in the matter, and when Lord Liverpool brought in the "Pains and Penalties" Bill, the King had no stauncher supporter than Lord Eldon.

When George IV was crowned in 1821, Lord Eldon was made an Earl and his grandson (his eldest son, the Hon. John Scott, having died in 1805) received the title of Viscount Encombe. William Scott, the Chancellor's brother, was at the same time raised to the Peerage as Baron Stowell. In 1827 Lord Eldon surrendered for the last time the Great Seal and retired to Encombe. George IV presented him with a tankard of silver-gilt, "its lid bearing an 'accession medal' of the King and the following inscription :—

The Gift of His Majesty George IV  
to his highly valued and excellent Friend  
John Earl of Eldon,  
Lord High Chancellor of England, etc.,  
upon his retiring from his Official Duties in 1827.

The key of the case in which it stood was put into Lord Eldon's hand by the King himself." (Campbell.) Lord Eldon returned to the House of Lords, however, in 1829 to oppose the Abolition of the Test Act. In spite of all his efforts, the Bill passed the third reading. This distressed him so much that he tried, though fruitlessly, to persuade the King to refuse the royal assent.

The greatest grief of his life occurred in 1831, when Lady Eldon died. He had loved her very dearly during their half-century of married life, and in writing to his brother on the day after her death speaks of it as "the first dark day of nothingness."

In 1832 the Reform Bill first saw the light, and Lord Eldon, though in deep grief for the death of his wife, went to the House to oppose it. He attended every day for a week, and then made a long and eloquent speech between six and seven a.m. after the last night of the debate.

At about this time it is said that the "radically" minded people of Poole had actually meditated an expedition into Purbeck for the purpose of an attack on Encombe, and were only prevented by a Conservative brick-maker, who bored holes in the boats that were to take them across the ferry. Lord Eldon was therefore able to receive his friends, including the Duke of Cumberland, in peace, notwithstanding the prophecies and attempts of the democracy of Poole.

Shortly afterwards the venerable Earl was again plunged into grief by the death of his younger son, William Henry, a man of singular talent and ability. However, a pleasing episode awaited him, for in 1834 Lord Encombe was to receive the degree of D.C.L. from the University of Oxford, and his grandfather as High Steward was called upon to assist the Chancellor of Oxford, the Duke of Wellington, in receiving him and other persons of distinction on whom the degree was to be conferred. When the ex-Chancellor's name was mentioned in the address by Dr. Phillimore the applause was immense, and when a voice from the crowd called out, "There is old Eldon—cheer him, for he never ratted," the



undergraduates responded with vociferous acclamation, and the Earl himself was so overcome that he put his head down on the desk and wept. The long, strenuous career was now drawing to a close, and Lord Eldon's last speech in the House of Lords was made on July 25th of the same year. It was in support of a Bill to oppose the "dangerous innovation" of the Great Western Railway. Although it was not a very important occasion, it enabled him to show, as Lord Campbell points out, his adherence to the principles which had guided him through life.

The next year he definitely retired from public life, and only entered the House again on November 15th, 1837, to take the oath of allegiance to Queen Victoria. He left Encombe early in November in the hope of seeing the Queen of eighteen, saying that he should be happy to say his "Nunc me dimittis" when he had heard her speech from the throne, and on the day before that notable event he went to St. Stephen's to qualify himself to be presented to his new sovereign. Mr. Farrer, his son-in-law, gives an account of Lord Eldon's last visit to the House over which he had presided for twenty-five years.

"Lord Eldon went down in his chariot to the House of Lords to take his seat. I met him as he got out of his carriage. Mr. Butt, who had been Lord Eldon's mace-bearer, and Smith, his butler, assisted him up the stairs. About half-way up Mr. Butt had a bottle of sherry, and persuaded his old master to take a glass of it. When we came to the door of the House, Smith requested me to support Lord Eldon into the body of the House, which I did. He went up to the Woolsack and said to the Lord Chancellor (Lord Cottenham), 'My Lord, I am happy to take this opportunity of assuring



you that everything I hear of you entitles you to my sincere respect.' He then went to the table, took the oaths, and signed the roll."

But the veteran ex-Chancellor was so excessively fatigued when he reached home that, to his infinite regret, he was unable to return to the House of Lords next day to hear the girl Queen make her first speech to her Parliament.

After this his health gradually declined, and on January 13th, 1838, he passed peacefully away at his house in Hamilton Place in the eighty-seventh year of his age. He was buried in the vault in Kingston Churchyard by the side of his beloved "Bessie."

Lord Campbell gives a detailed account of Lord Eldon's appearance:—

"In person he was about middle size, his figure light and athletic, his features regular and handsome, his eye bright and full, his smile remarkably benevolent, and his whole appearance prepossessing. The advance of years increased rather than detracted from his personal advantages. . . . He had a voice both sweet and deep-toned."

His title descended to his grandson Lord Encombe, together with the Dorset and Durham estates and a large portion of the half-million of money that he had amassed during his long and energetic life. Large sums were left to his two daughters, Lady Elizabeth Repton and Lady Frances Bankes, the latter also getting "Pincher," his favourite dog, together with an annuity of £8 a year bequeathed to that faithful animal.

The second Earl was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford, entered the House of Commons as member

for Truro in 1829, and, as has been seen, received the degree of D.C.L. from the University of Oxford in 1834. He married Louisa, the second daughter of Lord Feversham. On the death of his grandfather he made Encombe his chief place of residence, and took great interest in the estate and neighbouring village of Kingston, making many improvements. He died in 1854, leaving one son, the present Earl, who was born in November, 1845, and six daughters, two of whom married men of Purbeck, Lady Selina marrying Mr. Nathaniel Bond, of Grange, and Lady Charlotte the Rev. Eldon Surtees Bankes, rector of Corfe, and a scion of the family that for nearly three hundred years has owned that historic castle.

The village of Kingston is about half a mile from Encombe, a tree-girt path connecting the main street of the former with the north entrance of the latter.

At the highest point of the village, and really within the grounds of Encombe, stands the new church, dedicated to St. James, and built by the present Earl of Eldon. Owing to its lofty situation, it is not only the most conspicuous object in Kingston, but in the whole of the eastern half of Purbeck, the tall, square tower being visible for miles. The church was designed by Street, and is quite beautiful. It is built in the Early English style, the outer walls being of Purbeck stone and the decorations made of Purbeck marble, all of which was quarried in the neighbourhood. There are numerous pillars and stained-glass windows, and the screen and upper part of the pulpit are of finely wrought brass. The roofs of the chancel and transepts are of groined stone, and the floor is tiled.

The village is pretty, being, though on the top of a high

hill, buried in trees. Most of the cottages, which are of the local "Burr" stone and thatched, have roses and various flowering creepers climbing up them.

The old parish church, which was built by the first Earl on the site of the old chapel, is as plain a church of the early nineteenth-century style as one could meet with. The one remnant of antiquity is an ancient Norman round-headed doorway which has been inserted in the base of the west wall. Within an arched recess in the north wall there are four tablets in memory of the first Earl and Countess and their two sons who predeceased them, and on the south side mural monuments to the second Earl and Countess.

The Eldon vault is on the north side of the churchyard and separated from it by a railing. On the top, which is a grass-covered square of land, small slabs of stone indicate the names of those buried beneath by initials. From the north-east corner of the churchyard there is a very fine view of Corfe Castle, as it stands on its own small hill poised between two ranges of high ones.

A sandy road, first skirting Encombe grounds and then crossing Corfe Common, leads from Kingston to Corfe, two miles away.

Corfe for several centuries supplied Kingston with its religious worship. Until 1786, service used to be performed for a fortnight in the summer in the ancient chapel, now pulled down, by the Rector of Corfe. In that year, however, Mr. W. M. Pitt arranged with the Rev. Sir Thomas Bankes I'Anson, rector of Corfe, that service should be held twice every Sunday, and for this extra duty Mr. Pitt paid the curate of Corfe £15 a year.



KINGSTON, WITH DISTANT VIEW OF CORFE CASTLE

Kingston May B





In earlier times Kingston was called Kingston Abbas, or South Kingston, to distinguish it from other places that took their name from the royal owner.

The manor is first mentioned as belonging to the Crown during the Anglo-Saxon dynasty, and it, like Encombe, was given by King Edred to Ælfryth, the religious woman who most probably was Abbess of Shaftesbury.

The gift of the manor of Kingston is more closely wrapt in mystery than that of Encombe, for no less than three charters were found in Shaftesbury Abbey, each of which contains a description of lands granted by the King, which descriptions, though they differ in detail, obviously refer to the manor of Kingston and its environs.

In the earliest charter, dated 948, King Edred granted the manor to Ælfryth for life, and gave her power to leave it to whom she pleased.

In the second, 955, the same King gave the same lands to his favourite minister, Wihtsige.

The third, "Carta Adwige Regis de Corf et le Blackenwelle," and dated 956, is in its operative part the same as the second, the difference being in the name of the King, Adwige (Edwy) instead of Edred, and the addition of another witness.

As these charters were copied into the Shaftesbury cartulary in the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century, it is most probable that the transcribers did not know Anglo-Saxon, and often incorrectly copied proper names. This would explain the extreme difficulty of identifying some of the places mentioned in the list of boundaries. For instance, though it is easy to recognise that Blackenwelle is Blachenwell, it is less simple to identify Seort mannes pol with Chap-

man's Pool, and it would take a brilliant intellect to connect, without assistance, Safendune with Swyre Head.

In the fifty-fourth year of Henry the Third's reign an inquisition was held in which it was shown that the Abbess of Shaftesbury had the right to the wreck of the sea coming within this manor of Kingston. The charter containing this grant was confirmed by Edward III, Henry IV, Henry V, and Edward IV. Another advantage claimed by the Abbess was that her tenements and possessions by land and sea should be exempt from the jurisdiction of the Admiralty, as they had been from time immemorial. Even Henry VIII, in the early part of his reign, ratified these grants. But their tenacity, which seemed to be an hereditary endowment of the abbesses of Shaftesbury, could not hold their property from this king when England was in the turmoil of the Reformation; and so, together with the lion's share of Church lands in the country, the manor of Kingston came to the Crown.

In 1547 Edward VI granted Kingston to his uncle Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector of England. The Duke did not enjoy his new possession for long. After holding almost absolute power, he offended the people by his too stringent religious reforms, and rebellions occurred in various parts of the country; in 1549 he was deposed from the Protectorate and sent to the Tower. In 1550 he was pardoned and liberated, only to be rearrested on a charge concerning a plot to murder the Earl of Warwick in October, 1551, and he was condemned for felony and beheaded on Tower Hill early in 1552.

On the attainder of the Duke, of course Kingston reverted

to the Crown. It must, however, have been regranted to his son, who, after having been deprived of his titles and estates by the malice of the late Protector's enemies, was created Earl of Hertford in 1559, for in the forty-first year of Elizabeth's reign we find him in possession.

The second Edward Seymour was almost as unhappy as the first. He offended those in very high places by secretly marrying Lady Catherine Grey, sister of the unfortunate nine days' queen. When the marriage was discovered the bride and bridegroom were both sent to the Tower by Queen Elizabeth, as, according to an Act of Parliament passed in 1536, it was treason for a person not of royal blood to marry a relation of the sovereign without his consent. The Countess died during her imprisonment, and the Earl remained in durance vile for nine years.

The fascination the Seymours seem to have had for royalties did not bring them particularly good fortune. Jane could not have been ecstatically happy with Henry VIII, and indirectly the marriage led to her brother the first Duke of Somerset's disasters. The Protector's son, as we have seen, spent nine years in the Tower because he dared to marry a scion of royalty. His great-grandson, the second Earl and first Marquis of Hertford, was forced to quit the country because he had privately married Lady Arabella Stuart, James the First's cousin, while she, poor lady, was sent to the Tower, where she died. The Marquis, however, made his peace with King James, and lived to become a K.G. and Duke of Somerset at the Restoration, probably as a reward for supporting the forlorn hope represented by Charles I.

To return to Kingston; the Earl of Hertford sold it in

1604 to William Pitt, Esq., of the city of Westminster, through whom it descended to George Pitt, M.P. for Shaftesbury, who was subsequently created Lord Rivers, by whom it was in 1777 conveyed in exchange for other lands to William Morton Pitt, of Encombe, who sold it with Encombe to Lord Eldon in 1807.

There are two interesting farm-houses near Kingston, Afflington and Scowles. The former was once a manor and hamlet of some importance, having a market in Henry the Third's reign. The house was built in the seventeenth century by Lady Hatton's tenant, Giles Green. The manor took its name from a Saxon called Alveron, who held it before the Conquest. Later it became the property of the Clavells, from whom it passed to the Bonvills. In the tenth year of Henry the Eighth's reign Henry, Marquis of Dorset, sold "Aldrington" to Clement Druce, citizen and mercer of London, who in the twenty-eighth year of the same reign sold it to Thomas Hardie, the ancestor of Nelson's Captain Hardy, from whom it was purchased by William Constantine, who sold it to Sir Christopher Hatton, from whom it passed to the Ettricks. It was bought by the first Lord Eldon in 1822. There was once a chapel there, but not a single stone is left to mark its site. Scowles takes its name from the family of Scovill. It is part of the manor of Kingston, and after being held by Clavells and Dackhams came to William Morton Pitt, and from him to Lord Eldon.

The road from Kingston to Kimmeridge displays some of the finest scenery in the island. After leaving Lord Eldon's church it passes through one of the Encombe woods and emerges on a field-covered plateau. Swyre Head, one of the



highest points in Purbeck, stands stately on the left; Creech Barrow, a point of similar altitude, raises its head above the range of hills on the right; and ahead lies the wide and fertile valley. After a little the path, which has ceased to be a road in the ordinary conception of the term, passes through a gate and proceeds along the top of a precipitous hill. Down below there is a green valley with the manor-house of Smedmore nestling in a grove of forest trees in the centre, and beyond a vast expanse of sea. On the west are the little horseshoe-shaped bay of Kimmeridge and the tall hill called Tyneham Cap; farther on the ragged Gad Cliff can be seen; and in the distance Portland Bill looms like a shadow on the horizon. On the other side is the great wide valley dotted with old manors and farms. A little to the north Corfe Castle comes into view, and the tower of Kingston Church appears towards the east, while over the high range of Purbeck Hills there is a glimpse of Poole Harbour and the yellow cliff of Bournemouth.

A very steep path leads straight down the hill to the main road from Corfe to Kimmeridge, which, turning sharply to the right, crosses over the valley that was seen from the precipice walk.

Kimmeridge is a quaint little village, something like a capital T in shape, the cross at the top being composed of the church, vicarage, and a farm, and the centre stroke of a row of small flower-decked cottages with thatched roofs. The church, till recently one of the twenty-two churches that were donatives, has a Norman door and gables, and is very small and plain, the chief object of interest being the tomb of Sir William Clavell, knight banneret, in the north-east



angle of the chancel. The stone slab, now a part of the pavement, but till recently the side of the altar-tomb that was erected over his grave, bears the following quaint inscription in rude Roman capitals :—

Within this marble caskett lies  
 He who was learned, stout and wise  
 Who would for no expence conceall,  
 His projects for the common weall :  
 And when disloyall Irish did  
 Rebell against the Queane their head,  
 Approved valour then did gett  
 Him the reward of Bannerett.

The church is generally open, and if by any chance the door should be locked, the key may be found on the seat in the porch. After the village is passed, the road crosses a mile of downs and terminates at the coastguard station which overlooks the bay.

The bay, which is small, is flanked with cliffs composed of black shale, and consequently of melancholy aspect, and a disused boat-house, some decrepit boats, and herbage chiefly composed of coarse grass, nettles, and hemlock, add to the dreariness of the scene. The cliff on the left, "Hen Cliff," is surmounted by a round tower forty-two feet high. It was originally built by Mr. George Clavell, the last Clavell of Smedmore, and has, including the basement, four stories; a verandah which is reached by a flight of stone steps and supported by Doric columns runs round the first floor. The coastguards now use it as a watch-tower, and greatly appreciate the comfort afforded by its strong stone walls. From it the coast can be seen with all its promontories and inlets from Lulworth on the west to



KIMMERIDGE BAY

Kimmeridge Bay 1893



St. Aldhelm's Head on the east, and one can get an excellent idea of the dangers of the coast. Kimmeridge Ledges had the reputation of wrecking an innumerable number of vessels. If the navigator were unaware of the strong and insidious current in the bay, it was highly probable that his ship would be dashed upon the serrated rocks before he had realised the situation in the least. Nature, however, in this secluded spot was often assisted by humanity. For example, in Edward the Third's reign more than a hundred men were involved in robbing the *Welfare*, a ship from Dartmouth bound for London, which was wrecked on these treacherous ledges. The merchandise with which the vessel was freighted was worth £2000, and included thirty-two pieces of cloth of gold and two of Baudekin de soy (a silk tissue from Bagdad). At the trial at Sherborne it was found that Robert Kurlls, the owner of this vessel, had been wounded, insulted, and generally badly treated. Not only were the poor fishermen of the village guilty of the outrage, but the Abbot of Cerne himself had ordered the treasure to be seized and taken to "his manor of Kimmeridge, where he retained them for his own use." Many other persons of rank in the neighbourhood were also implicated in the atrocity.

Even in recent years these ledges have claimed their victims, the most important wreck during the last century being that of the *Tyne*, a royal mail steamer; but since the lighthouse was built on Anvil Point this coast is infinitely safer.

In *Domesday Book* Kimmeridge (Cumerish) is described as a parish or tything containing Great and Little Kimmeridge, Smedmore (Metmore, as it is called) and Chaldecots.

Great Kimmeridge—obviously the site of the present Kimmeridge, as it was a mile to the north-east of “Botteridge Pool,” now identified with Kimmeridge Bay—belonged to the monastery of Cerne, and Henry II granted to the Abbot of his day and all his successors the right to wrecks on the coast of his demesne. In Edward the First’s reign this right was set at naught by Elias de Rabayne, custodian of Corfe, who seized some wreckage belonging to the Abbot. The churchman refused to be robbed of his rights and properties without making an effort to regain them. He therefore went to law, and, what was more, won his case and got his charter ratified by the King. Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V, and Edward IV subsequently confirmed this charter.

After the Dissolution Henry VIII granted this manor, rectory, and the wreck of the sea to Sir Thomas Uvedale, knight, and his heirs, in consideration of the payment of £202. 13s. 4d. In the first year of Queen Mary’s reign Sir Thomas sold his manor to “John Clavell of Barneston, esquire, and Thomasin, his wife,” for £640, which appears to have been a brilliant financial *coup* on the part of the vendor. The estate continued in the Clavell family till George, the last direct representative of John and Thomasin, died in 1774, when it descended through his nephew, the Rev. John Richards, to Colonel Mansel, who now owns it.

One of the most important of the Clavells was Sir William, who was knighted by Queen Elizabeth for his military services in Ireland, and whose tomb is mentioned above. When he retired from the storm and stress of an army life he returned to Smedmore and tried to improve his estate of Kimmeridge. Lord Mountjoy having



discovered a mine of alum in the locality, Sir William built works and a stone pier for shipping, and, as Hutchins says, "brought the working of alum to perfection." But, alas, owing to others having obtained the King's patent for the sole manufacture of alum, the unfortunate knight was forced to give up his works, and owing to legal machinations pay the patentees the sum of £4000. This, added to the cost of the works and pier and other losses, amounted to £20,000 and nearly ruined him. The pathetic story of Sir William's alum works is told by the Rev. John Coker in the following words:—

"The next place that offereth itself is Smedmore, where Sir William Clavile, descended of an ancient Gentrie (as you have already hearde) built a little newe House, and beautified it with pleasant Gardens. This Place longe since had Lords of the same Name, from whom by Dolfin it passed hereditarilie to the Claviles, near adjoining the Sea: and not far hence, the newe Owner, being ingenious in diverse Faculties, put in tryal the Making of Allom, which hee had no sooner by much Cost and Travell, brought to a reasonable Perfection, but the Farmers of the Allom Works seized to the King's use; and being not so skilfull or fortunate as himself, were forced with Losses to leave it offe, and soe now it rests almost ruined. But in Place of it Sir William Clavile, who one disaster dismayed not, hath sithence sett up a Glass House (which is come to Perfection, and is likely to redounde to a good Benefit) and a Salt House. For Transportation of these Commodities as alsoe of white Salt (this is made in great abundance, by boyling it out of the Sea Water) hee hath at his own Charge, with great Rocks and Stones piled together built a little Key in imitation of that at Lime, for small Barkes to ride, invironed on the East Side with an Hill yielding myne (as they call it) for the Allom Works and a kind of bluish stones that serve to burne, for maintaining

Fire in the Glass House; but the burning yields such an offensive Savour and extraordinarie Blackness, that the People labouring about these Fires are more like Furies than Men."

The black stone or shale, which is found so abundantly in Kimmeridge, burns like coal, and contains an oil that may be used in lamps. At first sight this suggests a new Newcastle and a world-wide lowering of the price of coal, but on penetrating further into the subject a very great drawback is found: though the shale burns brightly and looks cheerful, it emits a sulphurous smell like the bitumen of the Dead Sea. Although the odour is said not to be unwholesome, it is intensely unpleasant, and few could be prevailed upon to burn it even in the cause of domestic economy. Dr. Pocock says in his *Travels to the East* that it in all points resembles a stone called *Hajar Mouse*, or Moses stone, which is found "beyond Bethany, in the way to Jericho, near the Dead Sea, and which burns like coal, and turns into a white stone, and not to ashes, and has the same disagreeable smell as the bitumen of the Dead Sea."

Perhaps the thing for which Kimmeridge is most renowned is the so-called "coal-money." This consists of curious-shaped circular discs of bituminous shale bearing marks of cutting tools, and almost always with a hole in the middle. The antiquarian theories concerning these remains are as interesting as they are contradictory. By many it is claimed that the discs were of Phœnician origin, and it is concluded that they were used by Greek or it may be Roman settlers in this neighbourhood in the same way as the earliest stamped leather coins (*pecunia*). Others argue that the hole

in the middle was for attaching these masses of shale to a lathe, and that rings, bracelets, etc., were cut from them, that the remaining discs were the cores only of these ornaments, and were thrown away as useless by the worker at the lathe. The fact that these discs are often found in barrows has suggested that a superstitious value was placed upon them. Coal or bituminous shale of a coal nature was believed to have magical virtue in keeping away serpents, and the fact that slabs of this material are found enclosing the well-known interment of mother and child, the most important of the early cistvaens, at Afflington, and also in a cistvaen described by Mr. Mills in 1826, seems to point to the truth of this.

Smedmore, one of the most important manor-houses of Purbeck, lies amidst its clustering grove of trees in the valley between the long cliff-like hill west of Swyre Head, and is about a mile from Kimmeridge. The house is built of red Purbeck ashlar stone, and the entrance is flanked by semi-circular towers reaching to the top of the first story. Part of the house is old, having most probably been built by Sir William Clavell, who lived there in 1643. The south front, which includes the hall and dining-room, and the fine oak staircase, are of the period, and a courtyard and "brew-house" at the back have the appearance of great age. The drawing-room and the greater part of the north side are comparatively modern. One of the most interesting facts about Smedmore is that it is still held by a descendant—and until 1773 was held by a lineal descendant—of Walter de Claville, who came to England with William the Conqueror.

In *Domesday Book* Smedmore is called Metmore, and was held by a certain Richard of William de Braose,

the estate being valued at 10s. Though Richard held other lands in Purbeck (including Little Kimmeridge) of the same lord, Smedmore seems to have been the most important, for his descendants took their name from it. The de Smedmores often witnessed charters and served on juries from Edward the First's reign, but the only interesting incident relating to them that has survived the oblivion of years is that one of the family was accused of illicitly stalking the King's deer in Richard the Second's reign.

Early in that same reign Henry de Smedmore received £12 a year rent for "lands in Kymerich" from "William Wyot, Agnes his wife, and William their son." In 1391 a new arrangement was made, and in a charter signed at Wareham on the Sunday before the Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle (December 17th), William Wyot agreed to pay a rent of six marks a year "out of the lands and tenements" of Smedmore to Henry Smedmore and Alice his wife. By another charter, also dated at Wareham, on the 29th (the Feast of St. Thomas the Martyr), Henry Smedmore "reciting that William Whiot, Agnes his wife, and William their son hold of him certain lands and tenements in Smedmore for their lives, the reversion of which belonged to him, releases, quitclaims, and warrants all his right in the same lands, to the said William and Agnes, and the heirs of William, in witness thereof he affixed his seal." Henry Smedmore's own seal being "unknown to many," he used the common seal of Wareham. This seal, in green wax, showing a crescent between a star of eight rays in chief and an indescribable device at the base, is still to be seen attached to the deed. "William their son" had a son John, who died without children, and a daughter



Johanna, who towards the end of the fourteenth century married John Clavell, son of Clavell of Leeson. In this way Smedmore and the adjoining lands came into the hands of the Clavell family, whose representative, Colonel George Clavell Mansel, owns it at the present day.

The Clavells are the only family still existent in Purbeck who are mentioned in *Domesday Book*. One of the oldest families in England, the Clavells, like many other English families of ancient lineage, find the cradle of their house in Normandy. Mr. Thomas Bond says, in his *Ancient Families of Purbeck*, that these Clavells most probably came from a village called Claville, in Champagne de Neubourg. In speaking of their migration into England he says :—

“Walter de Claville probably accompanied the Conqueror in his invasion of England, for we find him in possession of five lordships in Dorsetshire, and thirty in Devonshire, when the *Doomsday Book* was compiled. Burlescombe in the latter county was the chief residence of his descendants in the elder line, and here one of them—another Walter de Claville—founded the priory of Canons Leigh in the time of Henry II. Knoll and West Holme, in the Isle of Purbeck, were amongst the possessions of the invader, and the former place afterwards became the residence of a younger branch of the family. Another younger branch was seated at Quarr, in the parish of Worth, in the commencement of the reign of Edward I, and continued there till it became extinct in the male line in the time of Henry VIII, when an heiress brought the estate to the Dacombs. . . . About the same time—I mean the time of Edward I—a third branch of the Clavells settled in Leeson, in the parish of Langton, and was still residing there in the reign of Henry VI. A younger son of this latter branch enriched



himself about the end of the fourteenth century by marrying the heiress of Wyot, of Smedmore."

Although one of the leading families of Purbeck, none of the Clavells appear to have achieved glory outside the island, or even done more than "the trivial round, the common task" at home until the reign of Elizabeth, when Sir William Clavell commanded the Queen's forces in Ireland during the rebellion of the Earl of Tyrone in 1599, and was created Knight Banneret for his military excellences. A quaint verse on his tomb at Kimmeridge which has already been quoted describes this part of his career. As has been seen earlier in this chapter, the gallant knight was far less successful in commerce than in arms. Owing to his great losses in the matter of the alum, he was obliged to sell all his lands but Smedmore, Kimmeridge, and West Orchard. The amount of the loss can be better realised if an old document in sixteenth-century handwriting, still kept amongst the muniments at Smedmore, is cited. It is called "The Title and Pedigree of William Clavyle of Cerne" (grandfather of the Banneret), and gives the Clavell property as comprising Smedmore, Little Kimmeridge, Barneston, West Orchard, Church Knowle, East Crych, West Tyneham, and Baltington.

Having no children, Sir William, passing over his brother and sisters and their issue, adopted and made his heir Roger Clavell of Winfrith, a distant kinsman. There was reason in excluding his brother's son, John Clavell, for when quite young that individual fell into evil ways and adopted the career of a highwayman. He was ultimately apprehended for robbery, convicted, and put into prison. He, however, appealed



POOLE HARBOUR FROM GRANGE HILL



to Queen Henrietta Maria, and at her intercession the King pardoned him. While in his "lonely, sad, and unfrequented" prison he wrote what is called his "Recantation." It is written in verse, and appears to be dedicated to numerous personages, including, of course, "the King's most excellent Majesty," "Her Never to be equalled Majesty the Queen of Great Britain, etc.," the "no less ennobled by Vertue, than Honourable by their Title and Dignities, the Duchesses, Marchionesses, Countesses, with the rest of the most worthy and noble Ladies of that great Queen of Mercie, her Majesty of Great Brittain," also to the members of the Privy Council and the Judges of King's Bench.

The tone of the poem is not exalted. Having lived as a highwayman for years, he, when caught and imprisoned for the crimes appertaining to his profession, gives a detailed account of the methods of the gentlemen of the road and advises travellers how to circumvent them.

After he received his liberty he presented this poetical effusion to his "honourable friend, his ever dear and well-approved good uncle Sir William Clavell, knight bannerett," asking his forgiveness, on which his own happiness rested, and promising never to return to his evil life. Should he do so he concludes,

O then for ever disinherit me.

In 1634, when this work came out in its third edition, the editor states that it was "become very disputable amongst wise men, whether they should most admire his former ill ways or his now most singular reformation." One cannot wonder that the good Sir William chose another heir.

Roger Clavell's great-grandson George was the last male

representative of this branch of the Clavell family. He died childless in 1773, and left his estates to his sister's son, William Richards, with an injunction that he should assume the name and arms of Clavell; he also died childless, and the estates were inherited by his brother, the Rev. John Richards, rector of Church Knowle, who died intestate in 1833, and his property devolved on his coheirs-at-law, his sister Maria Sophia Richards, and his nieces, daughters of his elder sister Mrs. Pleydell. Maria Sophia left her moiety to her niece Mrs. Mansel (*née* Louisa Pleydell), whose grandson Colonel George C. Mansel now owns the Smedmore and Kimmeridge estates.

Of the two other farms in the neighbourhood, Little Kimmeridge and Chaldecots, there is not much to be said. The history of each is closely interwoven with that of Kimmeridge, and both now belong to Colonel Mansel. Little Kimmeridge may be said to be notable for its extreme smallness. Though it has indications that it was once a gentleman's residence, it is no larger than the modern cottage at its side. Chaldecots is now nothing more than a small farm.



## CHAPTER V

### "THE HEART OF THE ISLE" CHURCH KNOWLE, CREECH, AND STEEPLE

#### IN PURBECK. AN IDYLL

" . . . A gray old tower  
Built in a hollow of the windy hills  
That lift a rolling crest towards the north,  
Like some huge tow'ring wave for ever held  
From rushing down upon the vale beneath,  
Then southward sweep towards a rocky shore  
Where all day long the waters ebb and flow  
As year by year they eat into the land  
And year by year the slowly crumbling cliffs  
Pour down their tribute to the hungry sea.

Along the stretches of the middle vale  
Lie lonely farmsteads scattered here and there,  
Each house and cottage built and roofed with stone,  
Each girdled with a winding wall of stone,  
Each crouching underneath some grassy knoll  
Or sheltered by a westward belt of trees.

When summer days are hot and calm and still,  
The long day drowsy with the hum of bees,  
The short night voiceless as the silent stars,  
How sweet to lie upon the hills and watch  
The slowly moving shadows underneath,  
Soft image of the drifting clouds above.  
To watch the blue smoke stealing through the trees  
So quietly it scarcely seems to stir,  
To catch the distant shimmer of the sea  
In sunny glimpses through the op'ning hills,  
To see the young dawn blushing in the east  
And wak'ning all the valley with a song,

As louder swells the note of daily life,  
 The distant voice of men or bark of dogs,  
 With rapid tinkling of some browsing flock  
 And deep-mouthed lowing of the waiting herd.

The shrinking shadows sweep towards the north,  
 Then softly stretch along the eastern vale  
 As swiftly climbs the sun towards the south,  
 A moment pauses for his midday rest,  
 Then downward dips towards the waiting sea  
 And makes a golden glory in the west  
 With last long shadows from the dying day.

Soft twilight steals across the peaceful land  
 And warning lights flash out across the sea,  
 Then twilight deepens into silent night :  
 The bright stars gleam like jewels overhead  
 While dim lights answer from the gloom beneath,  
 A sweet faint air floats upwards like a dream,  
 And hills and valley gently breathe 'Good Night.'

THE valley of Purbeck has a character and atmosphere entirely its own, the spirit of which has been expressed by the Rev. W. D. Filliter in the above poem. The valley runs between the two ranges of hills from Swanage to Worbarrow, but the part called by Coker "the heart of the Isle" is that which lies between Corfe Castle and Lutton, at the western extremity of the parish of Steeple. This dale and its one river are quaintly described by Coker in the following paragraph :—

"The only River of the Island, seeming indeed no more than a Brooke, whose Fountain you shall see to arise in the Lands of John Bond, sonne of Denis Bond of Lutton Esquire, in the Parish of Steeple towards the heart of the Isle (whose Ancesters came into the Island in the ninth year of the Reign of King Henry the Sixth out of Somerset) this Brooke runneth along by Blackmanston, the Seat of William Bond third son of Denis Bond aforesaid a younger brother of

the Family of Lutton, and from thence the Brook runneth to Hide appertaineing to Robert Gerard. But before I goe out of this, I will look over the Hill and see the Habitation of Sir Edward Lawrence at Grange, in our Forefathers' days a House of Provisions for the Abbot of Bindon, which Henry the Eighth gave to Sir Oliver for his good services to him."

As well as Steeple and Creech Grange and the farms or manor-houses mentioned above, the "heart of the Isle" contains Church Knowle, the beautiful old manor-house called Barneston, and the farms of Bucknolle, Bradle, and Whiteway. Although in several cases the farms are either modern or very much restored, they stand on the sites of ancient manors, and the aspect of the district is much the same as it has been for six or seven hundred years. The road from Kimmeridge and Smedmore comes out on the main road that runs through the valley about half a mile beyond Church Knowle, and just opposite the path that winds over the hills to Creech; Steeple is about a mile further west.

In *Domesday Book* Knowle Steeple and Creech were included in one manor, and all belonged to Roger de Belmont, a relation of William I, and the ancestor of the Earls of Leicester and Warwick. Knowle is distinguished as being the only place in Purbeck that is said in *Domesday Book* to have had a residential priest. It is probably on this account that it received the additional appellation of "Church."

The area of the land now known as Church Knowle was in *Domesday Book* divided into four parcels. The first Gole or Cnolle was held by Roger de Belmont for a rent of 40s. This lordship comprised the site of the present village, and was also the home of the priest. The second Cnolle

was held by Walter de Claville, of whose family and collaterals so much has been said, and is identical with the farm of Barneston, of which more anon. The rent of this parcel was also 40s. The third, a hide called Chenolle, probably the site of the present farm of Bucknolle, was held by William de Braose, who held Creech and Worget and also Widston (Glanvilles Wootton or Wootton Glanville) from the Glanvilles, who were the lords of that manor. Later the Glanvilles became possessed of Bucknolle, Worget, and a part of Creech. The rent of Chenolle was only 20s.

Nothing more is said of Cnolle till the sixth year of the reign of King John, when Robert Tybovill or Turberville (one cannot refrain from suggesting that he was an ancestor, or at least a collateral, of Thomas Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles), who held land and stock there to the value of £10, was commanded by the King's writ to let Galfrid de Neville have land to the value of 50s. out of his estate. The de Clares, Earls of Gloucester, who inherited the territory from Roger de Belmont, and their descendants the de Burghs and the Mortimers, were the lords of the manor of Knowle Steeple and Creech until 1441, when the head of the Mortimer family ascended the throne as Edward IV, and both the manor and the advowson became united to the Crown.

In 1492 "the lordships or manours of Knoll Stuple and Criche" became the jointure of Elizabeth of York, the Queen of Henry VII. Five years elapsed between this grant and its confirmation owing to a geographical error, some of the land being described as being in Somerset instead of Dorset!

In the dining-room of Wolfeton House, near Dorchester,



CHURCH KNOWLE





the seat of Albert Bankes, Esq., and for centuries the home of the Trenchards, there is a stained-glass window, representing on one side Henry VII, and on the other Elizabeth, his Queen.

This triad of lordships seems to have been thought a fitting dower of Queens, for in 1541 it was granted by Henry VIII to Queen Katharine Howard, and three years later to Queen Katharine Parr. In the first year of the reign of Edward VI it was granted with so many other places in Purbeck to the Duke of Somerset. After his attainder it reverted to the Crown. In the seventh year of Edward VI it was given to William, Earl of Pembroke, and W. Clarke, of Herefordshire, who sold it with the advowsons of the churches and the wreck of the sea to Sir Oliver Lawrence for £600.

In 1697 the manor of Knowle (Steeple and Creech having been previously alienated) was sold by John Lawrence of Grange to William Colleris of East Lynch, who in 1700 sold it to Edward Clavell of Smedmore, from whom it descended to Colonel Mansel.

The village of Church Knowle comprises a few picturesque cottages lying on either side of a very winding road, and at its eastern extremity stands the church half hidden by trees. This church, which is dedicated to St. Peter, is very little, even after considerable enlargement. It was built in the Early Decorated style, six hundred and seventy years ago, and was then a small cruciform church, consisting of chancel, nave, two transepts, a south porch, and a tower at the west end. The chancel still remains in its pristine beauty, but the north transept has been lost in the new wing of the

nave, and the arch leading to the south transept has been raised so that the original plan is obliterated and a one-sided effect is given. Perhaps the really most interesting thing in the church is the Clavell tomb, which lies against what once was the east wall of the north transept. It is a large monument of Purbeck stone, consisting of an altar-tomb and a canopy. Beneath the canopy are the figures of brass let into the stone of John Clavell and his two wives, thus described by Hutchins:—

“In the centre compartment, a man in armour, bareheaded, kneeling at a desk, on which is an open book, his hands clasped in the attitude of prayer; his helmet and gauntlets lie near him on the ground; over his head a shield, surmounted by a helmet and mantle, having these arms and crest: Quarterly, 1 and 4 vair and a chef, 2 and 3 six escallops; Crest, a stag's head pierced between the horns with an arrow. Underneath the effigy, ‘The fygure of John Clavell Esquire husband of these two wives, made in MCCCCCLXXII.’ In the compartment on the left hand, a lady kneeling at a desk, on which is an open book, her hands clasped in prayer; behind her are three boys and one girl kneeling, with their hands lifted up. On the escutcheon over her head, the arms quarterly as above mentioned, impaling ten roundels, *Gifford of Ichell*.

“In the remaining compartment, a lady in the same posture as in the other, but unaccompanied by children. Underneath her, ‘The figure of Mistris Susan, wife to aforesaid John, daughter to Robert Coker of Mappowder, in the county of Dorset, Esquire, made in MCCCCCLXXII.’ Over her head is a shield Clavell quarterly as before on a bend three leopards' faces, for Coker.”

This monument must have been put up by John Clavell shortly after his second marriage in anticipation of future catastrophes.

About half a mile nearer to Corfe than Church Knowle is the farm of Bucknolle; as has been said, it is the Chenolle of *Domesday Book*, in which record it is said to have been held by one Walter of William de Braose, from whom it passed to the Glanvilles of Glanvilles Wootton. In Edward the Third's reign the family of the Glanvilles became extinct, and the estate descended through a daughter of the house, Johanna, who married Thomas Manston of Manston, to the Piercys and Cockrams. Lord Eldon purchased it in 1834.

About a mile west of Church Knowle, near the cross roads which lead in opposite directions to Kimmeridge and Creech, lies the beautiful old farm-house of Barneston. This, like so many farms in the neighbourhood, was once a manor-house. In Edward the Confessor's time it belonged to a Saxon called Bern, from whom it took its name Berns-ton, "ton" representing the Saxon "tun" or manor. When the Normans claimed the land, it was given to Walter de Clavell; later it passed to a younger branch of the Estokes of East Stoke. After various vicissitudes in Edward the Third's reign it became the property of John de Estoke, called Middlestrete, a scion of another branch of the family. In 1426 John Clavell of Smedmore married Johanna, cousin and heir of John Estoke, and so became owner of the estate, which remained in the Clavell family for several generations. In 1632 Sir William Clavell, the knight banneret, sold it, in order to realise funds to meet the consequences of his unfortunate speculation in alum, to William Bond of Blackmanston, whose elder daughter, Mrs. Lewis, inherited it, and through her granddaughter, Mrs. John Farr, it came to the Rev. Farr Yeatman, who sold it to George Filliter, Esq., of

Wareham, from whom it was purchased by the Rev. Nathaniel Bond of Grange, the father of the present owner.

Barneston is the most perfect specimen in Purbeck of a thirteenth-century manor-house. It is in excellent preservation, and looks extraordinarily picturesque as it stands with the high hills behind it and green fields and trees around.

Manor-houses in the thirteenth century usually consisted, Mr. Filliter says in his article on Barneston in the *Dorset Field Club Papers*, "of chambers in two stories, often detached; a kitchen, detached, and a hall; each with its various offices. There were capacious stables with harness-rooms, which sometimes contained beds, in which guests could be lodged. The whole group of buildings was surrounded by a wall, often with a gate-house in it." The upper story was reached by a staircase either inside or outside the wall. Henry the Third's chamber at Rochester had a chapel above it, with which it was connected by a circular staircase, and all who would attend the service had to pass through the King's room. Henry soon ordered a staircase to be built outside, so that he might have more domestic, if not political, peace. Barneston was originally built on this plan, the oldest part being the entrance-hall on the north side and a large room behind it, which now has a beautiful Tudor window at the south end. "This," says Mr. Filliter, "seems to have been a chamber, with its wardrobe underneath. In the wardrobe the household stuffs were kept, and the ladies did their spinning and needlework. It is not certain how the upper room was reached; there is a circular stone staircase in the north-east corner lighted by a small window with an ogee head. This staircase when first built was very narrow, but was





BARNSTON



afterwards widened." The next part built was a room to the west of the hall. On the east side there is a large apartment with an oak-beamed ceiling which has the appearance of Tudor work, but the outer walls date from the thirteenth century. The upper story corresponds with the lower, even to a large Tudor window in the largest room.

In the gable on the north side there is a window which is a perfect specimen of a house window in the thirteenth century. It has two lights with a quatrefoil above them and a stone seat beneath.

There was a court on the south, east, and west sides of the house bounded by a thick wall, but on the north the house itself seems to have been the boundary; as the walls there are three feet thick and it is strongly buttressed, it would have been difficult for the arms of enemies to make much impression.

A little beyond Barneston there are two farms—Whiteway, with its house near the roadside, and Bradle, about a mile nearer the southern hills.

Whiteway is not mentioned in *Domesday Book*, but it was probably the property of the wife of Hugh Fitz Grip, and from her seems to have passed to the de Lincolns and their descendants the Fitz-Paynes, under whom the Estokes were the mesne lords. In the sixteenth year of Edward the First's reign Peter Doget, chaplain of Corfe, held one mesuage and one carucate and a half of land in Whiteway of John Estoke, for one-fifth of a knight's service and a pair of gilt spurs and three pence paid every Michaelmas. Two years later, however, the King gave him a licence to alienate this estate to the prior and monks of St. Mary's Church, Ware-

ham, who continued to hold it till the Dissolution. In 1544 the manor of "Estwytway" was purchased from the Crown by Sir John Rogers, knight, who in the same year alienated it to George Chaldecot. Through the heiress of Francis Chaldecot, Whiteway passed to the Thistlethwaite family, in whose possession it remained till it was sold in 1773 to John Bond of Grange, great-grandfather of the present owner.

Bradle, like Whiteway and so many other places in the eastern part of Purbeck, belonged to Dame Fitz Grip, and from her passed to the de Lincolns. In Henry the First's reign it was inherited by William de Govis. Eventually it became the property of Roger Bavent, by whom it was given to King Edward III, who presented it to the monastery he had founded at Dartford. Thomas de Bridport, who had been Roger Bavent's tenant, continued to hold the estate under the monastery. In the fifteenth year of Richard the Second's reign, John Savage, who was descended from John Fremantle, *alias* Govis, sued Thomas Bridport for the possession of Bradle, and not only won his case, but got forty shillings damages. It is not known how the Bridports became possessed of Bradle, but Thomas, the best-known member of the family, had acquisitive tendencies, and on several occasions managed to obtain lands without the least right in the world. From John Savage it came through the Swanlands to the Wests, and in the sixteenth year of Edward the Fourth's reign Richard West, Lord de la Warr, died, seized of the manor of Bradle, in Dorset, and Haselden, in Wiltshire. In 1525 Leonard West, Lord de la Warr's fourth son, let Bradle to Roger Clavell of Barneston. Later it became the property of the Clavells, and in Charles the First's reign Sir William

sold this estate, with that of Barneston, to William Bond of Lutton. It passed through William Bond's daughter, Mrs. Lewis, to Mr. George Filliter, who sold it to Mr. George Mayo, from whom it was bought in 1862 by the trustees of the late Lord Eldon. It now belongs to the present Earl.

Quite near Barneston, between it and Church Knowle, as has been said, are the roads which lead in opposite directions back to Kimmeridge and on to Creech. The latter is very rough and steep, and few motor-cars would be able to negotiate it. After a time it brings the pedestrian who attempts its ascent to the top of the range of chalk hills which form the backbone of the island. A little beyond them, quite near, is that sphinx riddle of Purbeck, Creech Barrow. It is higher than the chalk hills, and can be seen for miles, its chief peculiarity being that it is not a high peak in the range, but an isolated alp rising straight up from the valley with a ravine between it and the other hills. Another eccentricity is that there is a layer of limestone on the top. As was said in the first chapter, the geological conditions of Purbeck are unusual. The great eruption left it with hard beds of Purbeck and Portland stone and Kimmeridge Clay by the sea on the south; to the north of these, soft beds of Lower Greensand and Wealden Clay; then again the hard chalk beds; and north of them once more soft Lower Bagshot, London and Reading Clay. The chalk beds which culminate in the hills pass under the soft clay beds and come out some miles northwards on the Dorset downs. From this it will be seen that Creech Barrow's cap of limestone, which has protected it from the wear and tear of life and the elements, is a most surprising circumstance. In answer to my inquiries on the subject,



Professor W. H. Hudleston, from 1892 to 1894 President of the Geological Society, the greatest authority on the subject, wrote me the following explanation:—

“In early Tertiary, i.e. Bagshot times, there was no Isle of Purbeck, neither did the English Channel exist. Briefly, there was not the slightest trace of the present topography. In early Tertiary times the chalk formation had been raised from the marine depths in which it was deposited, and upon its denuded surface a great variety of mechanical sediments were deposited. Some of these, such as the Bagshots, were largely of fluvatile, and, in some cases, lacustrine origin. It was in one of these lakelets of fresh water that the limestone destined now to form the summit of Creechbarrow was formed, and thus a small mass of calcareous matter was introduced into the sands and clays of the Bagshots. Long ages afterwards, when the country was acted upon by tectonic forces, this bit of limestone shared in the general movement. Its superior hardness preserved the soft underlying strata and thus served to form a hill such as we now see, when the denuding agents did their work.”

In King John's reign a hunting-lodge was built on the top of Creech Barrow, and a few stones of it still remain. It must have been an excellent spot from which to watch the movements of the deer.

From a scientific point of view the barrow is wonderful, and on account of the magnificent views that can be seen from its summit it is of interest to the artist. On the south-east the rugged coast-line is silhouetted against the sky, which towards the south dips to give a glimpse of Weymouth Bay, with the steep rock of Portland stretching beyond it ; to the south-west Lulworth Castle appears against its background of forest; on the north the wide downs of Dorset vanish into

the distance; on the north-west and north Poole Harbour, with its isles and inlets, gleams in the sunlight; whilst the long range of hills extends just beneath from horizon to horizon east and west. Due east is Swanage Bay, and not far away the tall, square tower of Kingston Church rises over the adjacent woodlands. Near at hand, amidst Creech Woods, are several farms, and just below the pinnacles of Grange can be seen, whilst the little church stands out prominently on its hill-top. Northwards, between the hill and the harbour, the white lines of the clay works enliven the dark green and purple of the heather.

These clay works, which are in the occupation of Messrs. Pike Brothers, are, like the stone quarries on the other side of the hill, of hoary antiquity. It is said that they were first discovered by the Phœnicians, and as there are remains of a Roman pottery at Norden, it is certain that they were worked by the Romans. What is even more remarkable than their antiquity is that the method by which the clay is now obtained is practically the same as in the earliest times. The clay which is taken from here is sent all over the world, and is used in every kind of earthenware; it has to be mixed with even china-clay before the latter can be moulded. Being the most plastic clay there is, it forms, as Mr. Pike says, the "bones of all earthenware." The clay beds, in which by the way no animal remains of any kind have ever been found, are oval and about ten feet in thickness; they extend over several square miles, from Grange to Furzebrook, and from the hills to the harbour. As the layers of clay were crumpled up by the great upheaval, several shafts of different lengths are required; after the shaft is sunk a number of

lanes are made which branch out in all directions, and the clay being liable to fall, they are supported by timber. The clay is dug out with a pickaxe and put in little waggons, which are pushed by boys to the foot of the shaft. There the trucks are placed in the cage and hauled up to the top, where a platform is ready to receive them. When the clay reaches the surface the first thing done is the separation of the good from the bad. The best kind is called blue clay, being white with thin blue veins; this goes to the making of pure white earthenware. As the clay is very crumbly when it is first dug up, it is piled in heaps and then tossed about after the manner of haymaking in order to make it sufficiently plastic. This done, it is thoroughly washed and beaten up until it is capable of being passed through a sieve; after that the water is pressed out, and the clay, now quite pure and plastic, is shipped off from a wharf on the banks of Poole Harbour, called Ridge, to all parts of the world. There is a horizontal bed near the surface from which the clay is dug out, washed, and cut into cubes about twelve inches by ten inches, which slide along a trough, and are put into a cart all wet and soft, to be eventually sent to Sweden. The variously tinted clays—pink, purple, and cream-coloured—are of very little use for earthenware, as they cause the finished article to be of a somewhat butter-coloured hue.

Working in the clay pits must be fairly healthy, as the people all live to an advanced age, and always manage to look much younger than they really are. One old man, who was working at the surface bed on the day of my visit, said that he was now seventy-three years old, that he began work in the clay pits when he was nine, and that he walked over



The Blue Pool J.W.G.B.

THE BLUE POOL.





the steep hills to Church Knowle and back, about three miles each way, every day, and also that in order to do this he got up at four o'clock in the morning.

Another characteristic of the place is the colour of the pools; several are quite a vivid green, and one which lies away from the road beyond fields and fences is a bright sky-blue. The water is clear, and its banks, which are deep and steep, are of fawn-coloured pink and purple, dotted over with occasional clumps of heather and gorse. The colour of the sky makes no difference to the hue of the water; on the greyest of days it is still of the same bright blue. This extraordinary colouring is probably accounted for by the nature of the clay in which the water lies. Like many other beautiful things, the colour of the pools is evanescent, and in a few years this one may have turned green, as a neighbouring one has done. Twenty years ago the pool on the roadside between Grange and Furzebrook was bright blue, now it is a sombre green.

The most beautiful house in Purbeck is Creech Grange, called by every one in the neighbourhood just "Grange," which stands in the sheltered corner made by the Purbeck Hills and Creech Barrow. It is encompassed by a glorious garden and encircled by a grove of tall trees.

The original house was built by Sir Oliver Lawrence in Henry the Eighth's reign, and the first impression on seeing the east front is that it is a wonderfully preserved specimen of Tudor architecture. In reality, however, this side of the house was rebuilt by the Rev. Nathaniel Bond on precisely the same plan that was followed by the original architects. Rebuilt, that is, all but the south end, which contains two

large oriel windows, one of which is at the east end of the drawing-room, and has all its lights filled with stained-glass representations of the arms of the Bonds for generations ; and the other, above it, the same in shape, but with ordinary plain glass. The arms of the present owner, Nathaniel Bond, Esq., are over the front door, which is on this side of the house.

The south side, which faces a lawn flanked by a double row of yew trees and paraded by proud peacocks, was built by Denis Bond in the days of Queen Anne. A bust of William III adorns the portal on this side ; there is a statue of James II in the garden, which shows that Denis was capable of appreciating both parties !

In spite of, or perhaps because of these varieties of architecture, the house in its entirety is infinitely picturesque and charming.

The garden, which is felicitously called by a lady who frequently stays at Grange "an old-world paradise," is quite as perfect as a garden can possibly be. Were it not that Bacon died about a hundred years before Grange garden was made, one would think that he had culled some ideas from it for his famous essay. There are lawns before the east and south sides of the house, and a beautiful garden with lakes and flowers, groves and alleys, on the north ; and an immensity of "heath or desert" beyond. The main garden is designed in the Italian style. In this part also there is a large rectangular pool, with a statue of James II on the bank at the end of it. Farther on there are vast masses of azaleas and other flowering plants, and when the year is young and gay all the spring flowers bloom amongst ivy, dark

shrubs, and bright grass—indeed, as Chaucer says of another garden,

No daintie flowre or herbe that growes on grownd,  
No arborett with painted blossoms drest  
And smelling sweete, but there it may be fownd  
To bud out faire, and throwe her sweete smels al arownd.

The whole of this part is encircled by a path between two laurel hedges, and here and there an opening is made through which one can observe the beauties of the garden. There are two fine avenues of Scotch firs, one called the Cathedral and the other the Temple Avenue, which quite suggest the nave of a church—a very long one—and its pillars.

Grange Chapel stands on a slight eminence a little to the east of the house and grounds. It is very small, and was built as a chapel of ease to Steeple by Denis Bond in 1746 of the stones from Holme Priory. The chancel arch, which is an excellent specimen of Early Norman architecture and has "dog-tooth" mouldings, was brought from the priory and reconstructed on the original plan; old capitals are used for the bases of the pillars, probably owing to the ravages of time having destroyed the original ones. The arch over the west door was also brought from Holme Priory.

In *Domesday Book* the tract of land that lies between the parish of Corfe on the east and that of Tyneham on the west was divided into four parts—Criz, Criz, and Cric, which correspond with East and West Creech, and Crist, nearest to Tyneham, which may be identified with Grange. In the time of Edward the Confessor the whole demesne was held by a thegn called Sirewold for a rent of 20s.; after the Conquest it became the property of William the First's half-brother,

Robert, Earl of Mortain, who let it to one Bretel, who also held Tyneham for 40s. a year. After being divided into various parcels which were held by different people, this manor passed to the monastery of Bindon shortly after it had been erected on its present site. Beatrice and Albrea Pylye, Roger de Crick, and Lary and Marelina de Crick all gave all the lands they had to the monastery.

“Walter de Olrey gave all the right, service, and lordship which he had in Cryk; and Geoffrey, Prior of Wareham, with the consent of the abbot and convent of Lire, relinquished whatever right he had in the lands, tenements, heaths, hills, pools, and other things in the manor of Crych. All these donations were confirmed by the abbot and monks of Bindon, by charter of King Edward I, 24 Nov. a.r. 9, and re-confirmed by *inspeximus* 6 Edw. IIId.”

During the time that the manor belonged to the monastery, the “grange” or farm was used as a country house or retiring place by the abbot, who farmed the adjacent land for the benefit of the monks of Bindon. The farm was valued in 1293 at £7. 14s. 2d. per annum, out of which a yearly payment of thirteen bushels of wheat had to be made to the castle of Corfe for its reparation. At the time of the Dissolution the value of the abbot’s lands in Creech was £7. 2s. a year. After the Dissolution, Henry VIII gave the grange or manor of Creech, with portions of East and West Holme and two acres in Rushton, to Sir John Horsey of Clifton, Kt., who sold it in 1540 to Sir Oliver Lawrence, one of whose ancestors was knighted by Richard I at the siege of Acre, in Palestine. In speaking of him Mr. Thomas Bond says in his *Ancient Families of Purbeck*:—

“Sir Oliver Lawrence was the first possessor of Grange;





CREECH GRANGE





he seems to have held the office of collector of customs of the port of Poole, before he was advanced to the dignity of knighthood. His paternity is still a subject of dispute amongst genealogists bearing his name, but he is said to have married a sister of Thomas Wrythesley, first Earl of Southampton, and to have been knighted at Musselborough field. Three generations of his descendants attained the honour of knighthood."

The Lawrences bear on their shield the arms of the Washington family, as in 1252 James Lawrence married the only daughter and heiress of John Washington, of Washington in Lancashire. The fact that the Washington arms (2 and 3 argent, two bars, in chief three mullets gules—more widely known as stars and stripes) are emblazoned with the Lawrence arms in Steeple Church has added great interest to the place for Americans; indeed, it is reported that a citizen of Boston at one time offered to restore the church, but when a letter was sent to him pointing out that the time for his munificence had arrived, no reply came and the matter ended. The connection between the Purbeck Lawrences and the celebrated George Washington is but slight. At the very nearest, the ancestress of the Lawrences may in the thirteenth century have been a cousin of an ancestor of George. Strength, however, is added to the theory of the connection by the fact that the branch of the Washingtons from which the President was descended frequently used Lawrence as a Christian name. What degree of collateral relationship this may have reached in 1700, when the last descendant of the Grange Lawrences died, and which was thirty-two years before George was born, may be worked out by genealogical enthusiasts. Sir Oliver Lawrence died in 1559, and was buried in Fernam, "and after

the ceremony his hachements were removed to the church of St. Mychael, in Steeple, within th'yle of Purbeck," and his estates, which included lands in Morden, Broadwinsor, West Holme, Rushton, Steeple, Bloxworth, and the rectory and advowson of Affpuddle, as well as the manor of Knowle Steeple and Creech, descended to his son Edward, who died in 1601, and was buried at Steeple; he was succeeded by his second son Edward, who was knighted in 1619, sheriff of Dorset in 1622, and M.P. for Wareham in 1626.

The Lawrences were very devoted Royalists, and in the time of John, the last member of the family who owned Grange, an event occurred that, unless their loyalty had been *sans peur et sans reproche*, might have had disastrous consequences for all their House. The incident is so strange that I will give it in the words of John Hutchins, who wrote the original *History of Dorset*, and to whom it was described by an eye-witness.

"On the top of the hill, south of, and opposite to, Mr. Bond's house, a very remarkable phenomenon was pretended to have appeared in 1678. One evening, in December, was imagined to be seen a vast number of armed men, several thousands, marching from Flower's Barrow over Grange Hill, and a great noise and clashing of arms was supposed to have been heard. Nothing appeared on the south side of the Hill. They were pretended to have been seen by John Lawrence, then owner of Grange, who lived there; and his brother and 100 more, particularly four clay cutters just going to leave off work, and by all the people in the cottages and hamlets there about, who left their supper and homes, and came to Wareham and alarmed the town, on which the boats were all drawn to the north side of the river, and the bridge barricaded; 300 of the militia were marched to Wareham; Captain

Lawrence and his brother went post to London, and deposed the particulars on oath before the council; and had not he and his family been of known affection to the government, he would have been severely punished, the nation being in a ferment about Oates' plot. This account I had from one Thomas Bolt, a native of Wareham, who then lived there, and perfectly remembered the particulars; he died in 1758, aged 89."

Nine years later, in 1686, this same John Lawrence sold Grange and all its appurtenances to Nathaniel Bond, Esq., of Lutton, one of the King's Serjeants-at-Law.

The Bonds of Grange trace their descent from Robert, who lived in Henry the Sixth's reign, and came to Purbeck from Hatch Beauchamp, in Somersetshire, where his family lived for at least a hundred years, in 1431. Mr. Thomas Bond says of his ancestors:—

"Like other families whose descent has been traced through many generations, this family has fluctuated in wealth and importance. One generation intermarries with a daughter of the Lord Chief Justice of England, in the reign of Henry VI their son is found in possession of a personal estate exceeded in amount by only two other instances in the county . . . and yet only two generations later the fortunes of the family had begun to decline, and were saved by the successful exertions of a younger brother."

This younger brother, whose name was John, made a fortune as a merchant in the days of Good Queen Bess, and bought his patrimonial property, as well as other estates. He was in Paris when the Massacre of St. Bartholomew took place, and thus escaped:—

"There were divers English merchants of London, residing in the same house, which belonged to a Monsieur La

Motte. Mr. Bond in his extremity had recourse to a stratagem, for seizing the wife and children of his host he dragged them to the leads on the roof of the house, and vowed that if the English were meddled with La Motte's wife and children should be killed, and so, says his son in his MS. account of the event, the English were 'myraculosly preserved.'

Denis Bond of Lutton, son of John Bond the merchant, wrote an account of the history of the family, and was on the whole quite an important personage. He was a Republican and a violent partisan of the Parliament, M.P. for Dorchester, and was nominated one of the judges appointed to try Charles I. Apparently he declined this doubtful honour, for he took no part in the trial and condemnation of his King. He and Cromwell were friends, and died within a few hours of each other. Here is Mr. Thomas Bond's account of the event :—

"Fatal illness attacked them both about the same time, and a violent tempest occurring, when the death of the Protector was hourly expected, the Royalists jestingly remarked, that the Devil was come in the whirlwind to carry him to his proper place. Another day, however, was given him, but Denis Bond dying in the meantime, it was said, the Protector, being not quite ready, had given *Bond* to the Devil for his future appearance."

He was buried in Westminster Abbey, but at the Restoration was, with other notabilities of the same party, "ignominiously cast into a pit before the back door of one of the canons of Westminster."

Before leaving this period of internecine war and its consequences some mention should be made of the beautiful and unfortunate Lady Alice Lisle. She may be regarded as



a lady of Purbeck, as her maternal grandfather, from whom her mother, Lady Beconshaw, inherited Blackmanston, was William, second son of Denis Bond of Lutton. It is quite probable that Alice Beconshaw spent a considerable amount of time in Purbeck before she married Sir John Lisle in 1630.

Sir John Lisle was a follower of Cromwell, and during the Protectorate held offices of authority, and eventually became Keeper of the Great Seal and a member of the Council of State. At the Restoration he retired to Lausanne, in Switzerland, where he was assassinated in 1664 by an Irishman who called himself Thomas Macdonnell, but who really was Sir James FitzEdmond Cotter. Sir John did not, however, pay all his debt to the monarchy with his life, for his disloyal deeds were expiated even more fully by his widow, Lady Alice, who was marked as a special object of vengeance by Jeffreys. After more than twenty years of trepidation and anxiety she laid herself open to accusation. On the day after the battle of Sedgemoor she afforded hospitality to two travellers, who turned out to have been implicated in Monmouth's rebellion. This was soon discovered by Jeffreys' emissaries, and Lady Alice Lisle was arrested. In spite of being vilified and browbeaten in the open court by Jeffreys, she was so sure of her innocence that she had no apprehension as to the result of the trial; even the jury, notwithstanding the reproaches and menaces of the judge, had to be sent back twice before they would bring in a verdict of "guilty." When this verdict was given, the prisoner was condemned to be "dragged on a hurdle to the place of execution and then to be burnt alive." This bar-

barous sentence was eventually commuted, and she was beheaded at Westminster on September 2nd, 1685. Her judicial murder is said to be "perhaps the foulest act which stains the memory of Bloody Jeffreys."

The eldest son of Denis Bond of Lutton died without children, and the second son William, the grandfather of Lady Alice Lisle, had no sons, so the estate passed to the third son Nathaniel, who bought Grange from John Lawrence in 1686. He was M.P. first for Corfe, and later for Dorchester, and, as has been said, was a Serjeant-at-Law. He died in 1707, and was succeeded by his son Denis, who was M.P. for Corfe for eight years, and who married Leonora Sophia, daughter of Sir William Colt, who was born at Celle while her father was envoy there, and was christened after her god-mothers the Electress Sophia of Hanover and Eleonora, Duchess of Celle. This Mr. Bond rebuilt part of Grange and laid out the garden. He was succeeded by his nephew John, from whom the present owner of the estate is directly descended.

The farm or manor of East Creech, a little to the north-east of Grange, had in its beginning a separate history from its more important neighbour. In the time of the early Edwards it was held by a family named Frank. In Charles the First's reign the heiress of the Franks married Edmund Hayle, whose descendant in 1773 sold it to John Bond of Grange, and since then it has with Grange belonged to the Bond family.

West Creech is in the parish of Steeple, and has a similar history to that of Grange, with which estate it was incorporated by the Lawrence family in the sixteenth century.



STEPLE



Orchard, south of Bucknolle, once belonged to the wife of Hugh Fitz Grip and her descendants, from whom it passed to the Newburghs and then to the Estokes, and, like Barneston, descended from the latter family to the Clavells, and eventually to the present owner, Colonel Mansel.

Steeple, the most western of the triad of manors lying in the heart of the valley, comprises a church, a vicarage, and a farm. All three buildings stand close together a little to the left of the high road, two miles from Church Knowle, and a similar distance from Grange across the hills. The most noticeable of these three buildings naturally is the church, which is dedicated to St. Michael, and stands on the summit of a little hill at the head of the valley flanked by the two ranges of hills. It is a very small church, and its high, square tower with a stair turret at the north-east angle contains three bells, one bearing the inscription "Sancta Anna ora pro nobis," and the other two "Anthony Bond made me 1654." The nave was built in the Perpendicular period, but a Norman door on the south side points to there having been an older church there once. The north aisle, which appears to be of later date than the nave, belongs to Grange, and the even more recent south aisle belongs to Blackmanston farm. The chancel and porch were rebuilt by the Rev. Nathaniel Bond. As was said earlier in this chapter, the arms of Washington are combined with those of Lawrence in this church. There is a shield in stone bearing the arms of Lawrence quartering Washington, with the letters "LE" above it, in the old porch. Over the door at the end of the north aisle is a shield bearing similar arms. The roof is of timber, and wooden ribs intersect each other at right angles, and along the centre rib the



arms of the Lawrences and the Washingtons are placed alternately at every bisecting rib. As has been said, this adds to the interest of Americans in the church. In various parts of the building there are the tombs of or tablets to the scions of important local families. There is a large monument in black marble in a frame of alabaster on the south wall of the chancel to Francis Chaldecot and Edith his wife, with a little eulogistic account of their lives. Within the altar rails is the tomb of Sarah Collins, wife of William Collins and daughter of John Churchill, also of Elizabeth, died 1674, and Maria, died 1728, the first and second wives of Nathaniel Bond of Grange. On the pavement outside the altar rails there is a stone bearing the inscription "Denis Bond, Esq. of Grange died 30 Jan. 1746 aged 69." A slab of grey marble in the body of the church shows the last resting-place of Roger Clavell and Ruth his wife; the inscription is now almost illegible. The burial-place of the Bonds is on the south side of the churchyard. Twelve of the family lie there, from John Bond of Lutton, who died in 1632, to John Bond of Grange, who died in 1844.

One of the rectors of Steeple, Samuel Bold, was a very celebrated controversialist. Born in 1649, he became rector of Steeple in 1682, and remained there till his death in 1737. He preached against persecution and vindicated the works of John Locke. He published a *Plea for Moderation towards Dissenters* in 1682; for this work he was fined and imprisoned.

There is now a pipe organ in the church, but in the vestry may be seen the old barrel organ which for years accompanied the choir and congregation with a melancholy note. The pipes were taken from it to give tone to the innovation, so it

is now quite shorn of its glory and its music. There is one more relic of the past in the church—a Saxon font. The vicarage is modern, though picturesque, and covered with climbing plants. The old vicarage is now a labourer's cottage.

The history of Steeple, as has been said, is connected with that of Church Knowle and Creech till the seventeenth century, when the manor and advowson of Steeple were sold by John Lawrence to Nathaniel Bond of Lutton. The farm of Steeple belonged to a younger branch of the Clavell family, to whom it was sold by John Lawrence in 1657. After nearly two centuries had passed, the Rev. Roger Clavell sold it to Mr. John Garland, whose widow left it to her third husband, the Rev. David Davies, who sold it in 1850 to Mr. Mansel, from whom it was purchased in 1864 by Mr. Thomas Bond, whose descendant, Mr. W. H. Bond of Tyneham, still owns it.

The farm is a large L-shaped building, chiefly noticeable for the stone tablet over the front door, bearing the initials of Roger Clavell, who built it, and Ruth his wife  $\frac{C}{RR}$  1698, and a secret hole about a foot square in one of the upper rooms where money could be hidden.

Not far from Steeple, near the hills on the south, is the farm of Blackmanston. It is mentioned in *Domesday Book* as being worth 20s. a year. Later it was incorporated with the manor of Povington, and so became the property of the Abbey of Bec, in Normandy. In 1613 William, second son of Denis Bond of Lutton, purchased it from Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, then lord of the manor of Povington. His daughter was, as we have seen, the mother of the unfortunate Lady Alice Lisle. William Bond died

at the age of eighty-two, and the farm of Blackmanston passed to his granddaughter Elizabeth Beconshaw, who married Sir Thomas Tipping, whose descendant sold it in 1699 to Edward Clavell of Smedmore, from whom Colonel Mansel inherited it.

Hyde, a strip of land on the east side of Blackmanston, was probably incorporated with Steeple in *Domesday Book*. It is just mentioned in Edward the Second's reign as the home of Henry de Hyde. From him it eventually passed to the Gerards; Elizabeth, the daughter of the last of the Gerards, married Sir Nathaniel Napier, from whom it descended to Humphrey Sturt, Esq., the ancestor of the present Lord Alington. The Sturts frequently used Gerard as a Christian name out of compliment to their ancestors.

"Lutton," says Hutchins, "is the largest and best farm in the parish." Like Blackmanston in early days, it was joined to Povington and belonged to the monastery of Bec. It is described in Edward the Second's reign as belonging to the Abbot of Bec, and containing "forty quarters of wheat, twenty quarters of barley, and ten quarters of beans, peas, and vetches; the stock then consisted of two heifers, two oxen, one bull, seventy sheep, and fifty-five hogs." From then nothing is said of it till the seventeenth century, when it is described as being the seat of the "Bonds who came out of Somersetshire into this island 9 Henry VI."

It is a picturesque-looking house, with thick grey walls covered with ivy, but the chief interest of the place is the barn, the roof of which was taken from the banqueting-hall at Corfe just before the castle was slighted.



TYNHAM





## CHAPTER VI

### TYNEHAM, POVINGTON, AND WORBARROW

"The green waves leap  
At the white cliff's steep."

EDWIN ARNOLD.

THERE is a cross-road a little east of Lutton ; the branch on the right leads over the hills to Grange, the direct road through fields with many gates to Tyneham. About a mile and a half farther on, just beyond Egliston Farm, this road divides again, the path on the right leading to the village, and the one on the left to Tyneham House, the seat of W. H. Bond, Esq. It was built by Henry Williams in 1583, as the date sculptured on a small shield over the east door shows. The main building of the house, which is of Purbeck ashlar quarried on the estate, is a fine specimen of Tudor architecture, one of its most interesting features being a stone staircase with a square core, the form of staircase which immediately succeeded the spiral. The upper windows are mullioned, but those on the ground floor were replaced by sash windows about the end of the eighteenth century, when light was thought to be of more importance than architectural beauty. On the west side of the house is an ancient building which rivals the oldest part of Barneston in point of antiquity. It is divided by a floor into stories that are connected by a winding staircase. It was

obviously once a banqueting-hall. For a description of it I will again refer to the paper the Rev. W. D. Filliter read to the Field Club:—

“This building is all that remains of the ancient manor of Tyneham. It has evidently undergone many changes. It seems to have been originally the hall of the ancient manor-house, and to date from the late thirteenth or fourteenth century.

“It seems probable that when the new house was built, in 1567, this hall being no longer required and being in too good condition to be pulled down, was converted into a cottage. A floor was put in, and the space above and below it was divided into rooms, and the walls pierced for the insertion of the windows which now light the rooms upstairs and down. . . . A portion of the handsome timbered roof of oak is still in position, and is somewhat remarkable, perhaps a unique specimen of timber roofing.”

The house is surrounded by trees, and is so completely buried in them that it cannot be seen till one is within a hundred yards of it; on the east side there is a fine avenue a quarter of a mile long.

A footpath due south from the house leads to the top of the cliff, where there is a stone shelter, known as the “ocean seat.” From this place is obtained a view of some of the finest coast scenery in Dorset. On the east St. Aldhelm’s Head stands out, almost blue in the distance, then the deep inlet of Chapman’s Pool, then Kimmeridge Bay with Clavell’s Tower above it. A little nearer, the flat, rocky formation of Broad Bench stretches far into the surf. Just beneath is the small cove Brandy Bay, so called because the crannies in its surrounding rocks were in the old days used by smugglers as hiding-places for their “tubs.” On the west the bold

outline of Gad Cliff overhangs the sea at a height of four hundred feet. Again I must quote the Field Club records, as Prof. Hudleston's description of the cliff is far beyond anything I could say of it:—

“This particular district of Gadcliff especially always reminds me of the more calcareous portions of the Alps. One might imagine that it was a kind of Dent de Morcles in miniature. Hard limestones were superimposed on soft sands and clays, in this case on the Kimmeridge Clay, and such a conjunction produced the feature which was so excessively striking.”

Ravens and peregrine falcons build in the crevices of its rocks, and once smugglers used to hide their contraband goods in the cave beneath. In front of all, the long arm of Portland stretches out from the westward like a bastion guarding the bay.

The village is about half a mile from the house, half-way between it and Worbarrow, and is merely a cluster of cottages with an ancient church. The last, which is dedicated to St. Mary and is very small, was restored in 1744. It has a nave and chancel, but no tower; the south aisle belongs to Tyneham House, and it is probable that the church was originally built to be a chapel to the great house. At the end of the north aisle there is a monument which is elaborately painted and gilded, containing a tablet supported with pillars and surmounted by a frieze, which asserts that underneath lie the bones of several Williams of Tyneham. On the north wall of the nave there is a black marble slab set in a Portland stone frame, which bears the following inscription:—

“Near this place lyes the body of Elizabeth Tarrant, servant to Mrs. Bond of Tyneham, in which station she con-

tinued 34 years. To the memory of her prudence, honesty, and industry, this monument is erected. She died August 2nd 1769, in the 54th year of her age."

The manor of Tyneham is bounded by Steeple on the east, Lulworth on the north and west, and the Channel on the south. In *Domesday Book* it is divided into four parcels: (1) Tigeham, which was held by Bretel, of Robert, Earl of Mortain, the step-brother of William I, and by six thegns in Edward the Confessor's time, its value both before and after the Conquest being 47s. (2) Tingeham, which was held by William, of Hugh de Abrincis, Earl of Chester and son of William the First's sister, and before the Conquest by a Saxon called Alnod. This parcel was worth 20s. (3) Also called Tingeham, which was held of the Queen by Anschitil Fitz-Ameline. In Saxon times it belonged to Brictric. Before the Conquest it was valued at £3 and afterwards at £4. (4) Tigeham, which was held by Edric, one of the King's thegns, styled "Eddricius præpositus" in the *Exeter Domesday Book*, and was only worth 63d.

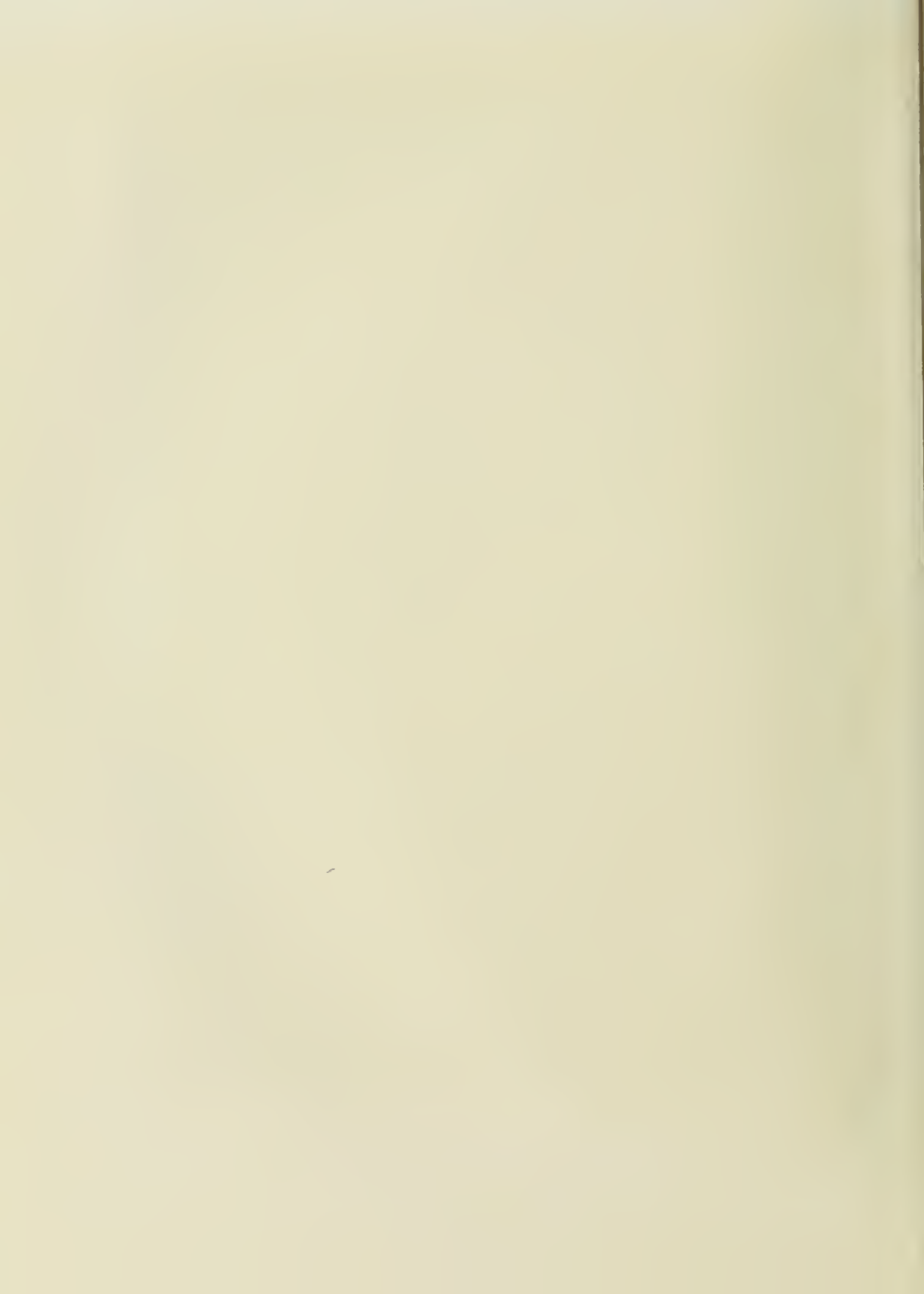
There is very little evidence by which these ancient parcels can be identified with the present divisions of the parish, but it is possible that Tigeham, which was owned by the Earl of Mortain, is now comprised in West Tyneham, which contains "the mansion-house and demesnes called Great Tyneham, the village of Little Tyneham with its several tenements," and South Tyneham, which was anciently called East Tyneham; and that Tingeham which belonged to the Earl of Chester is the present Baltington, which comprises a farm about a mile west of Tyneham and some tenements at Worbarrow; and that North and South Egliston may be the





GAD CLIFF, WITH ISLE OF PORTLAND IN THE DISTANCE





Tingeham that was held of the Queen by Anschitil Fitz-Ameline. It seems quite impossible to place the virgate of land held by Edric, and which was only worth 5s. 3d.

The most important of the four parts is what is now called West Tyneham, for it is not only the largest, but also contains the manor-house. From the time that it belonged to the Earl of Mortain until the reign of Queen Elizabeth there is very little contemporary history from which we can gather its story. A family called de Tyneham owned the manor of Warmwell from the time of King John to that of Henry VI, and from their name one imagines that at some earlier date they must have lived at Tyneham. Later this manor appears to have belonged to Thomas Bardolfe, through whose daughter Rohesia it came to the Russells. Both the writer of the MSS. in the Harleian Collection and Coker give accounts of the passing of Tyneham from the Bardolfes to the Russells and the Chicks in such a quaint manner that, as it is quite impossible to choose between them, both shall be quoted.

The Harleian chronicle is as follows :—

“Tyneham in Purbeck, East and West, out of an old parchment writing in French.

“Md that Thomas Bardolfe was seized of the mannor of Estynham in his demayne as in fee, which manner he gave to Walter Russell in free marriage with his daughter Royse, which Walter and Royse had issue between them Thomas, which Thomas took to wife Jane, and had issue John. This John took to wife Margerie the daughter of William Clavile of Holme, which John had issue William who married Alice daughter of John Durnford.”

Coker's account is less detailed, but it goes farther :—

“ Royse, daughter and heire to Thomas Bardolfe brought Tyneham to her husband Walter Russell whose posterity for a long continuance were lords of it, who joyening in marriage with the heires of William Clavile and Walter de Durnford, left afterwards for heires fower daughters married to Chick, Meere, Fry and Burdon ; their posteritye passed it away to Henry Williams.”

Both these accounts give the name of Walter to the Russell who married Royse or Rohesia Bardolfe, though in reality it was John,<sup>1</sup> and neither mentions the social position of the heiress of Bardolfe. Rohesia's mother was the celebrated Adela Corbet whom Chaucer might have had in his mind when he created the “Wife of Bath.” She was the daughter of Sir Robert Corbet, lord of the borough of Alcester, in Warwickshire, and commenced her matrimonial career by becoming the morganatic wife of Henry I. In this connection she became the mother of Reginald, afterwards Earl of Cornwall. At another time she married a gentleman called Herbert, and became the mother of Herbert and William Fitz-Herbert, who assisted Henry II so ably in the conquest of Ireland. Her third venture was Thomas Bardolfe of Tyneham, the result of this union being Rohesia.

When Rohesia married John Russell she was a widow, having previously married Henry de la Pomerai of Berry Pomeroy in Devonshire, and of la Pomerai Castle in Normandy, who, having joined the rebellion of Prince John, Earl of Mortain, against Richard I, was deprived of his lands, and, strange to say, died suddenly on the return of the King.

<sup>1</sup> *Rot. Pipæ Dorset et Somers.*, 3 John ; also Burke.

The royal connection of the ladies of the Bardolfe family was evidently recognised, for the Earl of Cornwall "gave to his *sister* Rohesia de Pomerai his manor of Riduri in that county in free marriage." As Madame de Pomerai, Rohesia had one son Jocelyn, who assisted his step-uncles the Fitz-Herberts in the war with Ireland. After marrying John Russell she had two sons, Ralph and Thomas; the latter inherited Tyneham, and the former became the ancestor of the Dukes of Bedford. In the records of the family it is stated that John Russell, K.G., first Earl of Bedford, lineal descendant of this Ralph, obtained an introduction to Henry VII, and through an unexpected circumstance was immediately taken into royal favour. As the Russells were connected for five generations with Tyneham, and Wolfeton House, where the "unexpected circumstance" occurred, is the property of Albert Bankes, Esq., a scion of the family of Bankes of Corfe Castle, perhaps the story of how John Russell gained an earldom may not be out of place here.

In the reign of Henry VII, Philip of Austria and his wife Juana of Aragon, who had just inherited the throne of Castile from her mother Isabella the Catholic, came to England, and before proceeding to London visited Sir Thomas Trenchard at Wolfeton House. Being deficient in the knowledge of Spanish, the host and hostess found some difficulty in conversing with their royal guests, so Sir Thomas invited his cousin, John Russell of Kingston Russell (a descendant of Ralph), who was a good linguist, to come and help him in his difficult situation. John Russell came, and as both his Spanish and his manners were excellent, he soon became a favourite with the King and

Queen, who, when they left Dorset for London, took him with them and presented him to Henry VII. The King of England appreciated the man who has been described as "the most accomplished gentleman of his time" and made him Gentleman of the Privy Chamber. John Russell was knighted by Henry VIII in 1513, and after many adventures was created Baron Russell, K.G., in 1539, and Earl of Bedford in 1550. He died in 1555. At various times he held the posts of Ambassador, Comptroller of the King's Household, High Steward of the Duchy of Cornwall, Lord High Admiral of England, and Lord Privy Seal. Had it not been for the accident of his being able to assist the King and Queen of Castile as interpreter, he might have lived and died "mute and inglorious" in the wilds of Dorset! The fifth Earl of Bedford, who besieged Sherborne Castle with the Parliamentary army, and afterwards joined the Royalist forces, was created Marquis of Tavistock and Duke of Bedford by William III in 1694.

Having given so much time to the descendants of John and Rohesia Russell's elder son Ralph, we must now go back to the younger son Thomas, who inherited Tyneham. His descendants appear to have lived quietly at Tyneham for about a hundred years, the estate passing in direct line from father to son, but in Richard the Second's reign John Russell, the fifth in descent from Thomas, died before his father, and as he had no brother the property was divided between his four sisters, Johanna the eldest, who had married Thomas Chyke, receiving the greater part of West Tyneham. The Chykes, Chekes, or Chicks were people of some importance, members of the family having represented Wareham in Parlia-



ment frequently from the commencement of Edward the First's reign to the end of Henry the Sixth's. The estate remained in the possession of the Chykes for several generations, and in Henry the Eighth's reign became the property of John Pope, apparently in right of his wife Johanna who was the heiress of the Chykes. John and Johanna Pope sold it in 1523 to John Williams of Herringston, Esq., for his life and that of his second son Henry. Henry Williams, who afterwards built Tyneham House, survived his father, and purchased the reversion in fee May 22nd, 1563. When he died in 1589 "the jury in their return of the lands held at his death . . . were unable to say (*penitus ignorant*) of whom his estate in West Tyneham was held," but it is probable that it belonged to the Abbey of Cirencester, co. Gloucester, as in a deed dated 5 Elizabeth, Tyneham is described as "subject . . . to an annual rent charge of 20 shillings payable to the late monastery of Ciceter." Henry Williams died seized of the manor of Tyneham, lands in West Holme, Lyme Regis, Whitchurch, Marshwood, West Lulworth, the farm of Burngate, and the reversion of a moiety of the manor of Egliston held of the Queen *in capite* by rent of 6s. 8d.

Jane, the only daughter of Henry Williams, married Sir Robert Lawrence of Grange, and their son John, who inherited his mother's estates, sold "the manors or lordships of Tyneham and Egliston" to Nathaniel Bond, Esq., of Lutton, in 1683, from whom Tyneham descended to Margaret Sophia Bond, who on her marriage with the Rev. Matthew Rogers gave it to her brother, the Rev. William Bond, rector of the parish, from whom it descended to William Henry Bond, Esq., in whose possession it now remains.

South Tyneham, in past years called East Tyneham, was, like West Tyneham, part of Tigeam, that was held by Bretel of the Earl of Mortain ; it remained part and parcel of West Tyneham until the division of that estate between the daughters of John Russell in Richard the Second's reign. His youngest daughter Alice, who had married William Burdon, inherited it, and it passed through her daughter Jane, who married John Dolfin of Stoborough, to Agnes Dolfin, who married William Clavell. In Elizabeth's reign it came to the Lawrences of Winterborne Steepleton, and in Charles the First's reign was bought by Elias Bond of Wareham, Lord-Lieutenant of the Isle and Captain of the Castle of Portland ; also M.P. for Wareham in 1658. Elias was succeeded by his nephew William Bond, whose two daughters, Mary Gould and Margaret Speke, eventually shared the estate. Mary, Countess of Abingdon, only daughter of James and Mary Gould, died without children, and left her share of the estate to her cousin George Speke, from whom it descended to William Speke of Jordans, near Ilminster, who sold it to John Garland in 1803, from whom it descended to the wife of Mr. Henry House of Lytchett.

Baltington, which, as has been said, is probably the Tingeam that belonged to the Earl of Chester in the reign of William I, consists of a farm and a few cottages in Worbarrow, and is situated between Tyneham Farm and Worbarrow Bay. Anciently one part of it belonged to Barneston and the other to the manor of Knowle Steeple and Creech. After the death, early in King John's reign, of Engelin, the lord of Egliston, in this parish, his widow recovered one-third of Baltington, her dower, from Adam de Morton. Eventually

Robert, son of Adam de Morton, or Mordone, granted it to William Martel, for which gift William gave Robert three silver marks and his wife one "bezant." In Edward the First's reign it became the property of the Stokeses of Barne-ton, to whom from then till early in the sixteenth century it appears to have belonged. In Henry the Eighth's reign it was held by the Gerards of Longhide of the Clavells of Barneston, and late in Elizabeth's reign it was brought by the heiress of the Gerards as her marriage portion to the Napiers of More Crichel. In 1793 Humphrey Ockley Sturt, who inherited it from the Napiers, sold it to John Bond of Grange, grandfather of the present owner.

Egliston, which was probably the three hides in Tingleham described in *Domesday Book* as being held by Anschitil Fitz-Ameline, was anciently divided from West Tyneham by a boundary-line which extended from Tyneham Cap, the summit of the south hill, to the summit of the hill on the north. The hamlet consists of two parts, North and South Egliston, the former now containing Egliston Farm, already mentioned, and the latter Tyneham Farm.

The name Egliston is obviously derived from Engelin or Eglin, who owned it before the third year of the reign of King John, and whose widow, after much litigation, was allowed to keep a third part of the estate for her dowry.

North Egliston anciently belonged to the Clavells of Quarr. In Henry the Eighth's reign their descendants, the Dacombs of Corfe Castle, sold it to Thomas Coles, from whom it was purchased by William Cockram, whose great-grandsons, Joseph and Samuel Symonds, eventually inherited it. Samuel sold his moiety in 1719 to Denis Bond of Grange,

and in 1811 Joseph's son William sold his share to John, brother and successor of Denis Bond. So once more the manor of North Egliston was united in one estate.

South Egliston belonged until the reign of Henry V to the Priory of Wareham, dependent on the Benedictine Monastery of Lire, in Normandy. In 1415, however, the alien priories were dissolved, and the King gave the Priory of Wareham and all other property of the Monastery of Lire that was in England to the Monastery of Shene, in Surrey, which he had himself founded. In Henry the Eighth's reign South Egliston was claimed by the Crown, and was given in 1546 to Peter Seynthill, who in the same year sold it to Sir Oliver Lawrence, whose son, Edward Lawrence of Grange, sold it in 1587 to Henry Williams of Tyneham. From the Williamses it passed to the Mohuns, and in 1634 Robert Mohun sold it to Elias Bond of Lutton, from whom it was bought by Henry Jubber in 1674, whose descendants in 1720 sold it to John Bond of Tyneham. After passing through the hands of many of the Bonds of Tyneham it was eventually inherited by John Bond of Grange, whose descendant now owns it.

About a mile north of Tyneham, and at the foot of the hills on the other side, lies the farm of Povington, and beyond it stretches the expanse of bracken and heather called Povington Heath. It is now a small hamlet, but once it was a manor. In *Domesday Book* it is said to have been held in demesne by Robert Fitz-Gerald. In Edward the Confessor's reign it was held by Almar and taxed for eight hides. After the Conquest it was worth £11, and the mill, which "paid 25s.," was claimed for the King's use.



Robert Fitz-Gerald was the son of Gerald, "dapifer" or royal steward to William I and uncle of William de Romana, Earl of Lincoln. He accompanied the Conqueror to England, and eventually became tenant-in-chief in the counties of Dorset, Somerset, Hants, Wilts, and Bucks. He gave Povington to the Abbey of Bec, in Normandy, which gift was ratified later by Henry II. When King John lost the duchy of Normandy, difficulties with regard to alien abbeys holding English territory arose. That the Abbot of Bec must have shown some diplomacy and clung to the good things of Povington the following statement shows. "The abbot . . . since Easter removed eighty-five cheeses, with all the wool of the sheep and lambs, one basket of loaves and 15s. worth of oates sold together with 28s. 9d. of the Easter rent." The abbot probably continued to appropriate the revenues of his quondam lands in Dorset, for in the next reign we find Avenel Fitz-Robert claiming the manor of Povington against the Abbot of Bec. The case was to be decided by a trial by wager of battle, in which, strange to say, the churchman won, and the vanquished knight "quit-claimed to the said abbot all his right in this manor." In later times Povington was reckoned as a parcel of the Priory of Okeburn, in Wiltshire, which was a "cell" to the Abbey of Bec.

When wars arose between France and England the King would claim the alien monasteries as his own. As has been already said, the alien monasteries were suppressed in 1415; Povington, however, became Crown property at an earlier date. It was granted by Henry IV to John of Lancaster, Duke of Bedford, but on his death in 1436 it again came to the Crown, and Henry VI granted it to "the master and



bretheren of the Hospital of St. Anthony in London and their successors for the exhibition and support at the University of Oxford of five well disposed scholars to be brought up in the faculty of arts, so that such scholars, before going to Oxford, should be well and sufficiently instructed in the rudiments of grammar at the College at Eton : each scholar to receive after the rate of 10 pence a week until he should attain the degree of Bachelor of Arts."

Nine years later it is recorded that Henry granted the "farm or rent which John Newburgh, Esq., ought to pay for the custody of the manor of Povington," and many other lands that used to belong to the alien Priory of Okeburn, to the Provost and Royal College of St. Mary's at Eton. Edward IV revoked the grant, but later in the seventh year of his reign, "for the welfare of himself and Elizabeth his consort whilst living, and for the health of their souls '*cum ab hac luce migravimus apud altissimum*,'" granted all the lands, including Povington (Newburgh's lease having expired), to William Westbury, then Provost of the College of Eton.

These various grants appear contradictory. It seems improbable that Henry VI should have granted certain lands to the Master and Brethren of St. Anthony's Hospital in 1442, and only nine years later given them to the Provost of Eton. The grant made by Edward IV is comprehensible enough : as has been said, he revoked the grants made by his conquered predecessor. Things became clearer, however, later on, and it is seen that Povington belonged to Eton for at least a hundred years, as in 1541 Robert Bishop of Carlisle, then Provost of Eton, "granted to Denis Bond a

lease of Lutton, parcel of the manor of Povington," in exchange for other lands.

In Edward the Sixth's reign Povington, like so many other places in Purbeck, was given to the Duke of Somerset. With most of his other possessions in the county it eventually came to his son, the Earl of Hertford, who sold it to John Vincent, yeoman, in 1616. It remained in the Vincent family till 1733, when the last male member bequeathed his estates to his sister's son, William Lord, from whom it was inherited by his cousin, William Dore, who sold it in 1801 to John Bond of Grange. Hutchins, without quoting any authority, says that there was once a chapel at Povington. The recent discovery of a fragment of a large cross in the ground points towards the truth of this assertion.

The farm of West Whiteway, which is intersected by Luckford Lake, one of the boundaries of Purbeck, is about a mile west of Povington Farm. It was part of the manor of Povington till 1615, when the Earl of Hertford sold it, one part to William Collins and the other to John Cockram. After passing through several hands early in the last century, both parts became the property of the Welds. Collins's share now belongs to Reginald Weld, but Cockram's was sold by Joseph Weld, Esq., to the Rev. Nathaniel Bond in 1863. West Whiteway Farm, once belonging to the Collinses, is interesting as being the only part of the Lulworth estate that lies actually in Purbeck.

Worbarrow or Worthbarrow Tout is a conical-shaped hill almost surrounded by water, being joined to the main cliff by a thin neck of land. Hutchins relates that at the foot of the barrow, a little north of it, there was a circular rampart,

where two or three cannons were placed in time of war. As the reviser of Hutchins points out, this cannot be correct, as such a situation would necessitate the ramparts rising straight "from out the azure main."

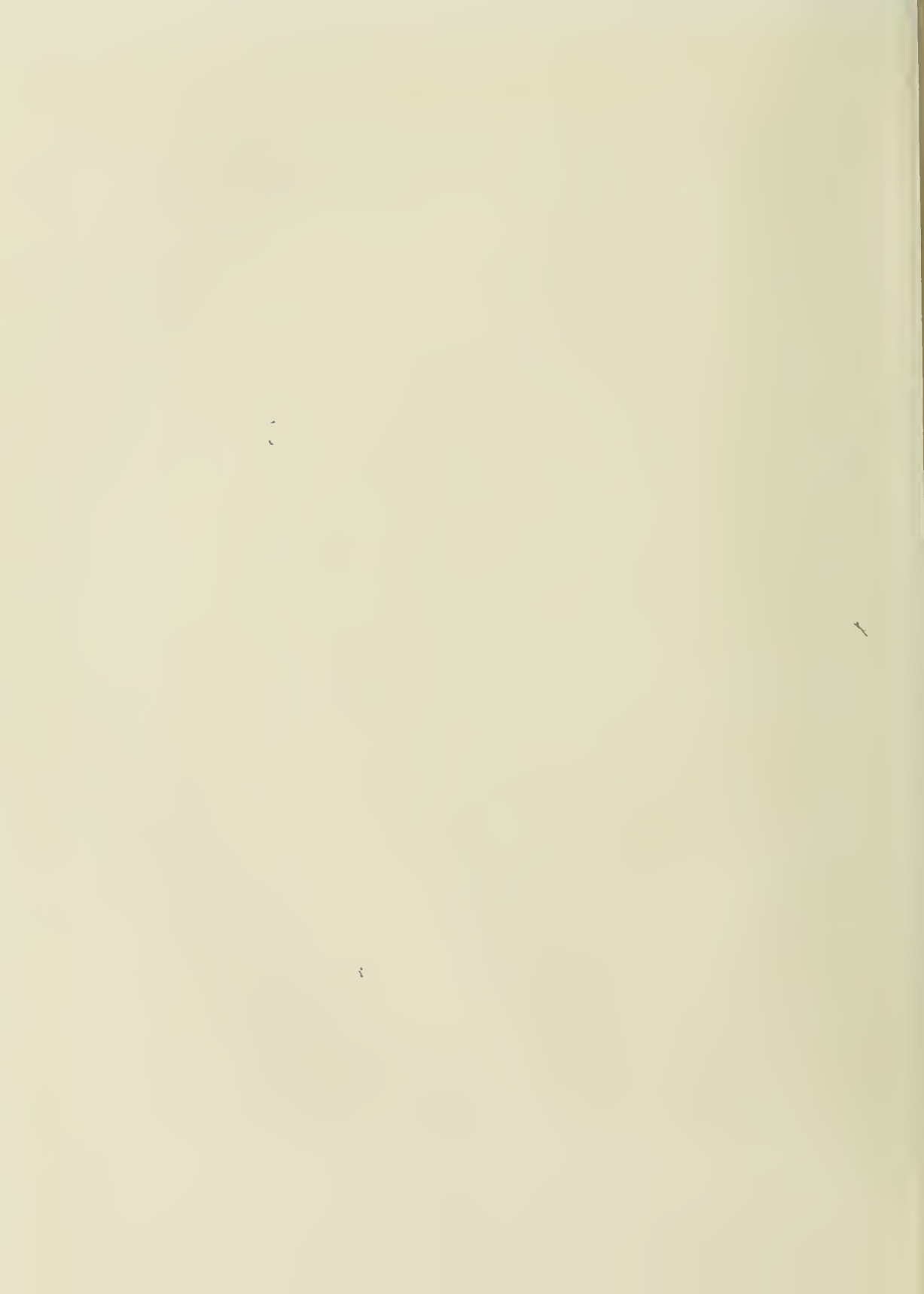
The Tout is now adorned by the flagstaff and other appurtenances of a coastguard station. Worbarrow Bay is one of the most beautiful in Dorset. From Worbarrow Tout on the east to Mupe Rocks on the west is a little more than a mile. Within the bay the coast-line dips twice to form inlets—on the east that called Worbarrow, beyond which the village nestles, and on the west the narrower ravine called Arish Mell, through which cleft can be seen the towers of Lulworth Castle "bosom'd high in tufted trees." West of Arish Mell, between Cockpit Head and Mupe Rocks, Mupe Bay sparkles in the sunlight. Colour here is more varied than it is generally in English scenery, except indeed in Devon: the rocks on the east are red and bronze, the cliffs on the west are white and dazzling, while the intervening shore is yellow; the sea is intensely blue, and the shingles on the beach have a look of silver; the land is covered with grass that in contrast looks a more than usually vivid green. Apart from its æsthetic perfections, Worbarrow claims consideration for its geological characteristics. When the geology of Purbeck was described in an earlier chapter, it was said that at Worbarrow would be found a key to the enigma, as here there are what may be called "end sections," beds of both cliffs and hills.

Rings Hill, the western extremity of the Purbeck Hills, extends from the inlet of Worbarrow to that of Arish Mell, and with the termination of this range of hills we come to the termination of Purbeck itself. But Rings Hill has a greater



Worbarrow Bay IWCB

WORBARROW BAY





interest even than being the boundary of the island ; on its summit are still to be seen the remains of the ancient fortification called Flowers Barrow.

Historians and archæologists, and all those learned in such subjects, differ as to whether the fortification was of British or Roman origin. As it stands on the top of a hill, 560 feet above the sea-level, and is inaccessible except from the north-east—even at that point only to be approached by the path that runs along the top of the hills which rise abruptly at Corfe and terminate at Arish Mell—as its situation is bleak and desolate, and provisions difficult to obtain, one cannot help imagining it to be the last stand of a people at bay, rather than the camp of a conquering army.

Charles Warne, F.S.A., in his *Ancient Dorset*, a work only published for its author and subscribers, gives an interesting and learned account of Flowers Barrow, from which I will quote :—

“The area of the Camp is between five and six acres ; the ground on the north and west falls very precipitously ; on the south side it presents the aspect of a lofty cliff, some six or seven hundred feet high, with its base gradually yielding to the incessant action of the waves ; while the summit, scored with numerous fissures, shows the destructive power of atmospheric agencies.

“For ages exposed to these influences, the results may be readily imagined ; the defences on this side of the Camp, whatsoever they may have been, are now, with the exception of a few slight traces, entirely swept away. Judging from the inclination of the area, and aided by their few vestiges, it is natural to infer that the entrenchments on the south side were parallel to those on the north. On this, the opposite side, the declivity of the hill increases rapidly as it recedes from

the area; from this circumstance protection was readily obtained by scarping the face of the hill, the effect of which was to produce a confused series of irregular banks, ditches, and platforms.

"An exception, however, must be taken to the inner line of defence, which, from its greater strength and better finish, plainly bespeaks either an addition to the original work, or a reparation of the rampart, by increasing its width and adding to its height; the surface of the area adjoining it shows signs of disturbance. It is easy to be seen, by comparison, what parts have been restored. This additional or improved rampart is attributable to a period of Roman occupation, and the reader is referred to the essay on Vespasian's early conquests in Britain, where he will find the explanation fully given. The entrances to Florus-Bury are on the south-east and north-west. The approach from the south-east is . . . by a level range; to obviate this defect, the entrance, which is remarkably narrow, is made through the outer rampart so close to the verge of the hill as to allow only a limited space of a few yards wide for ingress; and so precipitously does the land fall off to the sea that it would be impossible to assault the entrance with a large body of men.

"On passing through the outer approach, a broad level space, about thirty yards wide, occurs, and a little way within, on the right hand, an embankment or middle line of defence extends for about fifty yards, purposely as an additional protection to this the most vulnerable quarter of the camp.

"The entrance through the inner rampart is more to the north-east and east, immediately opposite the outer entrance, thereby giving the defenders an advantage, as an enemy would have to make his advance obliquely and so be flanked by this middle rampart.

"At the west end, the outer vallum is, as on the east side, thrown up somewhat in advance of the inner; and the exterior entrance is about fifty yards more to the north than the interior one; hence the passage is carried diagonally through the defences. The form of the camp seems originally to have

been somewhat of an oval, and its area is still marked with vestiges of early occupation, concerning which the late J. F. Pennie observes: 'In this mountain fortress the wells are to be seen that were dug by the warlike inhabitants to retain the water that fell from the clouds,' and 'a long series of circular excavations in this ground over which were erected their principal tents or booths, while on the south-west of the area may be perceived, from the inequalities of the ground, where stood the different divisions for their cattle.'"

This description brings a past world before our eyes, and if remembered when from the summit of the hill one beholds the rugged coast, the treeless hills, and heather-covered moors rolling away into the distance, it is easy to imagine the situation as it was two thousand years ago, when Britons in sheepskin and Romans in armour met and, fighting on the hills, turned the greensward crimson. Even in this remote region the "pomp and circumstance of glorious war" has left its indelible impress on the character of the scene, while two thousand years of peace have hardly left a trace.

The derivation of Flowers Barrow remains obscure. Hutchins suggests that it was named Florus-Bury, after Florus, a Roman officer in Vespasian's army, and though there is no particular authority for the statement, we must, in the words of Mr. N. Bond, "submit it to the judgement of the learned" as to whether its correct appellation should be Florus-Bury or not. The learned, alas, do not agree amongst themselves!

Beyond Cockpit Head, as has been said, Mupe Bay extends to Mupe Rocks, which form the western extremity of Worbarrow Bay; and behind its shore the great mass of Bindon Hill rises and stretches like a vast rampart defending the coast, till it descends abruptly at the east side of Lulworth Cove.

## CHAPTER VII

### LULWORTH, BINDON, AND WOOL

"This castle hath a pleasant seat ; the air  
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself  
Unto our gentle senses."

SHAKESPEARE.

**A**S Lulworth lies a little beyond the confines of Purbeck, to include it in a book about the island may not be strictly accurate ; there are, however, good reasons for its inclusion, the best being, that though geographically out of Purbeck, it *seems* to be within the limits of the isle. It is another example of the frequent occurrence in life of the apparent being more convincing than the actual. The real western frontier of Purbeck is marked by an insignificant stream and an imaginary line over hill and moor ; the apparent boundary is the broad road that runs from Wool to West Lulworth. And although East Lulworth is about two miles west of the real boundary, a traveller from Wool to West Lulworth, seeing the woods and the castle of East Lulworth, together with well-known Purbeck landmarks, such as Creech Barrow on the left, naturally associates them in his mind, and regards East Lulworth as part of Purbeck.

West Lulworth, perhaps better known as Lulworth Cove, forms a gate to this end of the isle ; the place is six miles





LULWORTH CASTLE





from a station, but the road is good, and it is only possible to traverse the island in a really satisfactory manner by beginning or ending the journey here. Only from the top of the hill between Worbarrow and Lulworth Cove can the whole of Purbeck with the range of hills be seen, stretched out like a map in the distance; historically, also, the two Lulworths and Purbeck are closely connected.

In the last chapter a word was said about Bindon Hill, which extends from Arish Mell to Lulworth Cove. Lulworth village lies at the foot of the hill on the west, sloping down to the shore of the celebrated cove. It is a small quaint hamlet, with cottages of irregular height, size, and frontage, their only similarity being the uniform way in which flowers strive to cover them and hide their differences. One or two shops smile from their large windows upon the infrequent wayfarers. A strong spring of water which comes direct from Bindon Hill flows through the village and empties itself into the reservoir which now supplies the Lulworth estate with much-needed water. A little more inland than the village is a small church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, its chief interest being a Perpendicular tower, which, according to Hutchins, "incorporates the remains of an Early English tower and porch." West Lulworth used to be in the parish of Winfrith, and was separated only about fifty years ago.

About a mile from the cove, along the Wool road, there is a farm called Burngate, which, if Coker be right in his opinion, stands very near the place where "Thomas, Lord Poynings, built an house, and called it Mount Poynings after his own name." Lord Bindon later pulled down this house

and used its stones, together with those of Bindon Abbey, to build Lulworth Castle.

The cove of Lulworth is one of the best-known inlets on the south coast. Its surprising renown is probably due to the fact that its attractions are threefold in character; one might almost say they symbolise the good, the true, and the beautiful. They certainly represent utility, science, and beauty; a safe harbour, geological evidences, and exquisite scenery.

The earliest chronicler of Lulworth is John Leland, antiquary to Henry VIII. "I saw," he says in his *Itinerary*, "on the shore a little fishar town caullid Lilleworth . . . wher is a gut or creke out of the se into the land and is a socour for smaul shippis." He does not appear to notice the beauty of the creek, but, as Hardy says, Nature was not *invented* till the beginning of the nineteenth century!

Lulworth Cove is an almost circular inlet with a large opening on the south. Hardy describes the projecting rocks on either side of this aperture as "the pillars of Hercules to this miniature Mediterranean." The cliffs descend gradually as they follow the shore of the cove, and when almost opposite the opening they vanish altogether and leave a valley in which the village nestles.

Though we are told by the learned that the geological peculiarities of the cove were produced by the ancient "thrust fault," and the scientists prove their point by showing that the strata of one pillar of Hercules exactly correspond with those of the other, the romanticism of the scene encourages one's fancy, and one imagines that in olden times the British Dragon, "of the great Pendragonship," once lived

here in the rock-bound pool, and one day, seeing Roman soldiers on Bindon Hill above, in terror burst the adamantine barrier and escaped into the sea.

The rocks on the west of the cove are wonderful. Stair Hole has a wall of arched rock in front of it, the arches being large enough to admit of the passage of a small boat from the open sea to the pool within; further west, past St. Oswald's Bay, the extraordinary natural arch called Durdle Dore stands out from the cliffs, and is so large that a sailing-boat can easily pass under it.

From the coastguard station on the top of a conical hill not far from the western pillar of Hercules there is a very fine view, but the coast scenery can be better seen in all its splendour from the more western promontory beyond the grounds of Britwell. From here one can see the whole of Weymouth Bay, from Portland Bill to St. Aldhelm's Head, and this was the place chosen by Millais for the scene of his picture of the Romans leaving Britain.

Bindon Hill, with its two ridges, rises abruptly on the east side of the cove: the higher ridge on the north, called by the inhabitants "Swine's Back," is about the height of the chalk hills of Purbeck, and after a steep descent there comes a wide plateau, which rises again slightly before it reaches the precipitous cliff. Not far from the eastern pillar of Hercules, at a place called South Rock, the façade of the cliff ends about three feet above the sea at high water in a ledge or terrace on which lie the fossilised remains of a forest; even from the top of the cliff one can see not only the roots and branches of the trees, but also the grain of what was once the wood; one piece in particular looks like the transverse section of a huge oak tree.

Between the cliff above this fossil forest and the flight of steps that leads down to the shore there is an old house, part of which was once the chapel of Little Bindon. Though very much out of repair, having been used as a receptacle for farm produce, this tiny church is by no means a ruin; the tracery of its Early English windows and its pointed doorway are still extant. Its history, however, must be told in another place.

In the early days of the last century there was a real and ever-present fear in the minds of the people living near the south coast that Napoleon would cross the Channel with his army in a flotilla of flat-bottomed boats, land in the night, devastate the neighbourhood, and march to London. The various legends that seem to float in the air of how Napoleon once landed at Lulworth, not with his legions but almost alone, have been grasped by Thomas Hardy and welded into one perfect story. An old man, Solomon Selby, tells his companions in an inn kitchen of his wonderful experience one night in the year 1804. His father, a native of Lulworth, had been a shepherd, and either he or the narrator used to sit up all night on the hillside and watch the sheep. One day Solomon's uncle, "a sergeant in the sixty-first foot," came to visit his father, and volunteered to share the boy's vigil. The man and the boy climbed the hill, and finding all was well with the sheep, curled themselves up in a heap of straw that lay inside the thatched hurdles; the soldier told wonderful stories till both he and the boy fell asleep. The rest of the story I will give in Mr. Hardy's own words:—

"How long my nap lasted I am not prepared to say. But some faint sounds over and above the rustle of the ewes in



the straw, and the bleat of the lambs, and the tinkle of the sheep-bell brought me to my waking senses. Uncle Job was still beside me; but he too had fallen asleep. I looked out from the straw, and saw what it was that had aroused me. Two men, in boat cloaks, cocked hats, and swords, stood by the hurdles about twenty yards off. I turned my ear thitherward to catch what they were saying, but though I heard every word o' it, not one did I understand. They spoke in a tongue that was not ours—in French as I afterwards found. But if I could not gain the meaning of a word, I was shrewd boy enough to find out a deal of the talkers' business. By the light o' the moon I could see that one of 'em carried a roll of paper in his hand, while every moment he spoke quick to his comrade, and pointed right and left with the other hand to spots along the shore. There was no doubt that he was explaining to the second gentleman the shape and features of the coast. What happened soon after made this still clearer to me.

"All this time I had not waked Uncle Job, but now I began to be afeared that they might light upon us, because Uncle breathed so heavily through's nose. I put my mouth to his ear and whispered, 'Uncle Job.' 'What is it, my boy?' he said, just as if he hadn't been asleep at all. 'Hush,' says I, 'two French generals——' 'French?' says he. 'Yes,' says I. 'Come to see where to land their army!'

"I pointed 'em out; but I could say no more, for the pair were coming at that moment much nearer to where we lay. As soon as they got as near as eight or ten yards, the officer with a roll in his hand stooped down to a slanting hurdle, unfastened his roll upon it, and spread it out. Then suddenly he sprang a dark lantern open on the paper, and showed it to be a map.

"'What be they looking at?' I whispered to Uncle Job.

"'A chart of the Channel,' says the sergeant (knowing about such things).

"The other French officer now stooped likewise, and over

the map they had a long consultation, as they pointed here and there on the paper, and then hither and thither at places along the shore beneath us. I noticed that the manner of one officer was very respectful towards the other, who seemed much his superior, the second in rank calling him by a sort of title that I did not know the sense of. The head one, on the other hand, was quite familiar with his friend, and more than once clapped him on the shoulder.

"Uncle Job had watched as well as I, but though the map had been in the lantern light their faces had always been in shade. But when they rose from stooping over the chart the light flashed upward and fell smart upon one of 'em's features. No sooner had this happened than Uncle Job gasped, and sank down as if he'd been in a fit.

"'What is it—what is it, Uncle Job?' said I.

"'O good God,' says he under the straw.

"'Who?' says I.

"'Bonaparty,' he says. 'The Corsican ogre. O that I had got but my new-flinted firelock, and that there man should die! But I haven't got my new-flinted firelock, and that there man must live. So lie low, as you value your life!'

"I did lie low, as you mid suppose. But I couldn't help peeping. And then I too, lad that I was, knew that it was the face of Bonaparte. Not know Boney? I should think I did know Boney. I should have known him by half the light o' that lantern. If I had seen a picture of his features once, I had seen it a hundred times. There was his bullet head, his short neck, his round yaller cheeks and chin, his gloomy face and his great glowing eyes. He took off his hat to blow himself a bit, and there was the forelock in the middle of his forehead, as in all the draughts of him. In moving his cloak fell a little open, and I could see for a moment his white-fronted jacket and one of his epaulettes.

"But none of this lasted long. In a minute he and his general rolled up the map, shut the lantern, and turned to go down towards the shore.

"Then Uncle Job came to himself a bit. 'Slipped across in the night-time to see how to put his men ashore,' he said. 'The like o' that man's coolness, eyes will never again see! Nephew, I must act in this, and immediate, or England's lost.'

"When they went over the brow, we crope out, and went some little way to look after them. Half-way down they were joined by two others, and six or seven minutes brought them to the shore. Then, from behind a rock, a boat came out into the weak moonlight of the Cove, and they jumped in; it put off instantly, and vanished in a few minutes between the two rocks that stood at the mouth of the Cove as we all know. We climbed back to where we had been before, and I could see, a little way out, a large vessel, though still not very large. The little boat drew up alongside, and was made fast at the stern as I suppose, for the largest sailed away and we saw no more.

"My Uncle Job told his officers as soon as he got back to camp; but what they thought I never heard—neither did he. Boney's army never came, and a good job for me; for the Cove below my father's house was where he meant to land, as his secret visit showed. We coast-folk should have been cut down one and all, and I should not have sat here to tell the tale."

By way of making "confusion worse confounded," it was arranged by a political geographer of the eleventh century that East and West Lulworth should be in different parishes. In *Domesday Book* Lulworth was divided into four parcels, the boundaries of which are now uncertain. West Lulworth was, however, most probably Luluord, which was surveyed in conjunction with the parish of Winfrode or Winfrith. It has therefore a history separate from that of East Lulworth until the fourteenth century, when the latter estate was purchased by John Newburgh of Winfrith and West Lulworth.

Henry I gave Winfrith, and, incidentally, West Lulworth, to Robert de Newburgh, fifth son of Henry de Newburgh, Earl of Warwick, and brother of the celebrated Roger of Warwick, to be held of the King in chief, "by serjeancy of holding water to the King on Christmas Day, and to have the silver bason and ewer." This privilege was held by the Newburghs till the family became extinct.

Robert inherited his father's possessions in Normandy, and was seneschal and justiciary of that duchy. He died in 1158, at the Abbey of Bec, of which he had been the chief benefactor, and was buried in the chapter-house. His son Roger, who appears to have settled down on his estate of Winfrith, founded Bindon Abbey in 1172 in conjunction with his wife Matilda de Glastonia, sometimes called the Countess of Sarum, granddaughter of William de Glastonia, who commenced the monastery at Little Bindon. Robert, their son, is chiefly renowned for having been "amongst other illustrious nobles party to a treaty of peace between King Richard I and Tancred of Sicily, on the occasion of the passage of the former to the Crusades in the Holy Land." Henry, the next in succession, gave in 1276 six manors in Dorset to Queen Eleanor "for ever." His son John petitioned the King to return them, and so eventually they came back to their rightful lord. His son, also John, was knighted and sat in Parliament for Northampton. Robert, who succeeded him, was a celebrated person. He threw in his lot with Lancaster and Mortimer and opposed Edward II in 1322. "The name of 'Sire Robert of Newborgh' is enrolled amongst the knights 'Bachelors' taken prisoners in arms against the King at the battle of Boroughbridge." A few months later he was liberated



on consideration of the payment of a fine of £100, and a "promise to serve the King in his wars." He fought against the French in Guienne in 1325. His eldest son Thomas, apparently an unimportant person, succeeded him; but in the tenth year of Edward the Third's reign he "quit-claimed" the whole to his younger brother John, who, in the following year, purchased East Lulworth from William de Est Lulworth. From the date of this purchase, 1337, the history of West Lulworth is merged in that of East Lulworth, and will be told in conjunction with that of its more celebrated neighbour.

Mention has already been made of Little Bindon and Bindon Hill. The story of the latter takes us back to the Early Britain of almost prehistoric times. Pennie, the local *littérateur*, believes it to be the site of a Phœnician city, but Warne says that theory is "the offspring of ardent imagination rather than of sober thought," but even he describes these "remains of Bin-Dun as those of a settlement of the highest antiquity, which became, through the slow progressive civilisation of ages, the principal maritime town or city of a large district; and, like many others, it was perhaps occupied for long ages before it attained the distinction of being invested with walls and embankments." The prosperity of this "city on the hill" was probably due to the sheltered haven of Lulworth Cove lying at its base. The Durotriges were a seafaring people, and a natural harbour would be of infinite advantage in the environs of one of their cities.

In spite of its bygone glories, the city of Bindon has been scantily recorded by historians: it is poetically referred to by Pennie, both in prose and verse, scientifically treated by



Warne, and described with brevity and accuracy by Miles in the following words:—

“ . . . a hill which rises to a considerable height, having on its summit the remains of a former city, unnoticed by any historian, but of a most peculiar character, being an immense tract of ground, enclosed by stone walls of enormous thickness, measuring from fifteen to eighteen feet, a parallelogram in shape, and its entrance flanked by two stone walls, while the bases of the towers, between which stood the gates, are perfectly distinct.”

Earlier in this chapter it has been said that a very small church is still in existence on the south side of Bindon Hill. This church marks the site of the original Bindon Abbey. A charter of King John leaves no room for doubt that the abbey commenced by William de Glastonia and Matilda his wife at Little Bindon was afterwards refounded by Roger de Newburgh and Matilda his wife on the south side of the Frome, near Wool, where the ruins can still be seen. The monks of Bindon took little account of William de Glastonia's foundation, for in Henry the Eighth's reign it was found that “alms were annually distributed to the poor of Bindon ‘*in cæna domini*’ for the souls of Roger de Newburgh and Matilda his wife, ‘first founders of the monastery.’” However, as was stated above, Matilda de Newburgh was the heiress of the founder of the monastery at Little Bindon, and it may have been at her suggestion, mindful of her grandfather's intention, that Roger refounded the abbey on the more fertile spot by the river, and so the work of William de Glastonia was perfected by his descendants.

Though Bindon Hill was a centre of commerce when Cæsar rode through the Forest of Andred, and a nucleus of

religious enthusiasm when William de Glastonia commenced the monastery, since 1172 it has been dead, "long dead," and its walls are "a handful of dust."

East Lulworth is about two miles north-east of the cove ; it comprises a cluster of cottages, a church, and dominating all and giving character to the scene a castle which bears a strong likeness to the Bastille.

The manor of East Lulworth and its contingent demesnes are said in *Domesday Book* to have belonged to the Earl of Mortain, and to have been held of him by a family who took their name from the place and were henceforth known to posterity as the de Lolleworths. In Edward the First's reign, however, William de Lolleworth held the estate *in capite* for one knight's service. At about this time the Newburghs of Winfrith appear to have wished for the possession of East Lulworth, as Ahab wished for that of Naboth's vineyard, and negotiations for its purchase were opened ; but it was not until the ninth year of Edward the Third's reign that John de Newburgh became, in consideration of the payment of £200 to William de Est Lulworth, lord of East Lulworth.

Both the Lulworths and many other estates in Dorset remained in the Newburgh family till Henry the Eighth's reign. The earlier Newburghs of Winfrith, as we have seen, set their mark upon their times, but from John, who bought East Lulworth, to Roger, the last of the race, no one achieved more renown than that of knighthood and shrievalty of Dorset.

In 1517 Roger Newburgh, eighth of his line, who was lord of East Lulworth, died and left only one child, a daughter, Christian, who married Sir John, afterwards Lord Marney of

Layer Marney, in Essex, and brought as her marriage portion her vast possessions in Dorset. Lord and Lady Marney had no son, and at their death their estates were divided between their two daughters—Catharine, who married Sir Thomas Poynings, later created Lord Poynings of East Lulworth, and Elizabeth, who married Lord Thomas Howard, second son of the third Duke of Norfolk, afterwards created Viscount Bindon.

The Poyningses died childless, and disputes as to the disposition of the property arose. Lady Poynings, as the Dorset estates had been settled on her, left them to her brother-in-law Lord Howard of Bindon, and Lord Poynings, in spite of the fact that they were his wife's, made a will leaving his lands in Dorset as well as those in Essex to his brother Sir Adrian. Sir Adrian seems to have been more successful than the Howards in the suit, as his sons-in-law—his family consisted of three daughters only—Andrew Roger, Edward and George Moore, sold practically all the Poynings estates to George Goring, who sold them to Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, second son of the fourth Duke of Norfolk.

There seems to have been a fatality about the heirship of Lulworth in the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth centuries. As we have seen, neither Sir Roger Newburgh, the Marneys, nor the Poyningses had a son, and the two sons of the Howards of Bindon failed to continue their race. The elder, Henry, died without a son, and was succeeded by his brother Thomas, third Viscount Bindon, who commenced to build the present Lulworth Castle, chiefly from the stones of Mount Poynings and Bindon Abbey. On the death

of Thomas the title became extinct, and East Lulworth was inherited by his kinsman, the first Earl of Suffolk, who had previously bought the Poynings estates. (In Queen Anne's reign, Lord Henry Howard of Walden, Deputy Earl Marshal, was created Earl of Bindon, but his son died childless.)

Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, who sat in Parliament as Lord Howard of Walden, was a very great personage. Born in 1561, as an officer in the navy he distinguished himself against the Armada in 1588, commanded the Azores fleet and was Admiral of the Third Squadron in the Cadiz expedition (1596), and was created K.G. and Baron de Walden in the following year. In 1601 he was Constable of the Tower, and was given his earldom by James I in 1603; M.A. Oxford and Cambridge 1605, Chancellor of the latter University 1604, Lord-Lieutenant of several counties, including Dorset, and from 1616 to 1618 Lord High Treasurer. After having attained this altitude he experienced, like Wolsey, the killing frost which nips the root of honour, and fell. He was imprisoned and fined for embezzlement in 1619. He died in 1626, and was succeeded by his son Theophilus, who was succeeded by his son James, who in 1641 sold to Humphrey Weld, Esq., of Holwell, in Hertfordshire, his estates in Dorset, which included the manors of East and West Lulworth, Combe Keynes, Burngate, Wool, Great Bindon, Little Bindon, Winfrith Newburgh, East Burton, all the farms contained in these manors, the rectory of Combe Keynes, and the liberty of fishing in the Frome from Dorchester to Wareham.

The Weld family, formerly settled at Eaton in Cheshire, is one of the oldest in England, dating from before the



Conquest. Its present head, Reginald, according to Burke, Gwillim, and Camden, is descended in the direct male line from Edrick surnamed the Wild, or Sylvaticus, who was nephew to Edric, Duke of Mercia, husband of Edina daughter of King Ethelred. One member of the family was Sheriff of London in 1353. The most notable members of the House of Weld since its immigration into Dorset are: Humphrey, Governor of Portland Castle, who bought Lulworth in 1641, and completed the building of the castle; Edward, born 1741, who gained vicarious and posthumous celebrity from having been the first husband of Maria Smythe, afterwards Mrs. Fitzherbert, who privately married George IV; Thomas, who in 1794 gave his estate of Stonyhurst, in Lancashire, to the Jesuit Fathers who came to England when their community at St. Omer, in France, was suppressed, and by whose munificence they were enabled to found the great Roman Catholic college there; and His Eminence, Cardinal Thomas Weld, son of the preceding, who confirmed the gift of Stonyhurst to the Jesuits, and on the death of his wife took Holy Orders and was ordained priest in 1821. Four years later he was consecrated Bishop of Kingston, in Canada; in 1830 he received a cardinal's hat from Pius VIII, and died in Rome in 1837. He was the first Englishman who had sat in the Conclave since the Pontificate of Clement IX.

Cardinal Weld transferred Lulworth to his brother Joseph, who entertained Charles X of France, with his family and suite, when they came to England after the revolution of 1830. Edward, the eldest son of this Joseph, was father of the present owner of Lulworth; his second son, Thomas, who



inherited the estates of Ince Blundell, in Lancashire, from Charles Blundell, and assumed the additional name of Blundell, was the father of Charles Weld Blundell, who is now tenant of Lulworth Castle. Lulworth Castle, designed by Inigo Jones, which for more than three hundred years has "stood four-square to every wind that blew," is a grey stone fabric forming a perfect cube of eighty feet, with round towers at the corners rising sixteen feet above the walls. Its strange resemblance to the Bastille is probably accounted for by the fact that its architecture was copied from its fourteenth-century predecessor. The castle itself has three stories, with three rows of four windows on each front; the towers have four stories, and four rows of three windows in each. The principal front is faced with Portland stone. Two statues of ancient Romans in their gowns surmount the chief entrance, and on each side of it, in niches supported by four Ionic pillars, are statues of women holding in their hands symbols of the four cardinal virtues; above the niches are shields bearing the arms of Weld and Stanley.

The basement of the castle, used for servants' offices, is very old, containing remains of a previous building. In one of the arches, as Mr. Weld Blundell points out in his paper in the Field Club records, there is still to be seen a fourteenth-century moulded window. The rooms are large and lofty; the saloon, or ball-room, extends the whole length of the building between the towers, and some of the ceilings are beautifully carved in Early Chippendale style. The staircase, which is stone and very wide, occupies a considerable amount of space, and is the only way of egress from the principal rooms. Numerous portraits of members of the Weld family

adorn the walls of the various rooms, painted by famous artists; but the greatest art treasure the castle possesses is a beautiful copy of Raphael's "Transfiguration," which is now on the staircase, but which was formerly hung above the altar in the chapel. There is a private chapel in one of the towers where Mass is celebrated during the week, although there is a large one in the grounds which is used by the villagers who are of the old faith. A terrace, called the cloister because it is paved with the tiles brought from Bindon Abbey, runs round three sides of the house; it is reached by a broad flight of steps, and is guarded by a balustrade of stone pillars. Around the castle and the private grounds is the park, which is enclosed by a stone wall four miles long. The old village was near the stable, and was demolished by Thomas Weld when he built the park wall in 1773. The present village is outside this wall.

There seems to have been a castle at Lulworth from Norman times, for Tyrrel, in his *History of England*, says that Robert, Earl of Gloucester, took "Lullward Castle" for the Empress Maud in 1146 from one of Stephen's generals. This first castle of Lulworth, probably built by the de Lollworths, has been entirely destroyed, and even its site is not known. The castle that succeeded it was, as can be proved from the basement of the present building, of fourteenth-century date. As it was in that century that the Newburghs acquired East Lulworth, nothing is more probable than that they should have built themselves a castle there. Leland's description of the ancient seat of the Newburghs, which he calls a "goodly place" standing near the church, does not interfere with Mr. Weld Blundell's theory that the present

castle is built on the foundations of the fourteenth-century one, for the castle is only a few minutes' walk from the building that used to be the private chapel of its lord.

The third Viscount Bindon began to build the present Lulworth Castle in 1600, but it was not finished until after the purchase of the estate by Humphrey Weld. Many royalties have visited Lulworth Castle. James I stayed there for a few weeks in 1615 for the hunting; one can be sure that the great Earl of Suffolk gave him excellent sport. During the Civil War the castle was used as a fortress by the King. In 1643-4, it was occupied by the Parliamentary forces under Captain Thomas Hughes, who stripped all the lead off the roof to make shot and shell with which to storm the loyal castle of Corfe. Though much damage was done to the building by the rebels, it was not destroyed, for which its then owner, Humphrey Weld, was devoutly thankful. His great wealth enabled him to have it repaired as soon as peace was restored. Charles II and the Dukes of York and Monmouth came in 1665—rooms in the castle still bear their names—and more than a century later George III, with Queen Charlotte and retinue, came over from Weymouth to visit his friend Thomas Weld several times. George IV when Regent came once or twice, and Mrs. Fitzherbert spent some time here during her first husband's life. The castle seems more redolent of her memory than of that of any of the others, perhaps her portrait by Gainsborough which is there diffuses a little of her vivid personality. There is a letter concerning this from Mr. Weld Blundell to Mr. Wilkins in the latter's *Mrs. Fitzherbert and George IV*, which I will quote:—

“It is unfinished as to her marvelous aureole of hair,

which she persisted in wearing *au naturel*, when all wore wigs and other hideous erections. She is *pétillante d'esprit*, and would convince the most incredulous of her early beauty and originality. I have heard it said by my great uncle Weld that, when being painted for this portrait, she was so indignant the first sitting at the artist's outline of her fuzzy head, filled in with grey impaste, that she jumped up saying, 'Why the man has given me a grey wig,' and bounced out of the room, vowing that nothing would induce her to sit any more to him. There is no trace in it of the aquiline nose which she developed later."

Quite near the portrait there is a secret trap-door, from which a narrow flight of steps leads to a secret apartment—a comparatively comfortable one, capable of sheltering a priest for some considerable time from the dangers to which those of his calling were subject in penal days. There seems to be an unconscious consistency in the picture of Mrs. Fitzherbert guarding, as it were, the refuge of priests of a Church to which she was so loyal and for which she suffered much.

When in 1830 Charles X of France was driven from his throne and country, the English Government offered sanctuary, and Mr. Weld invited the fugitive royal family and their suite to visit his castle for three months before proceeding to Scotland. They landed at Poole and drove to Lulworth. Charles's mind must have been dwelling on the terrible memories of past years, for on seeing the castle he exclaimed, "Surely it is the Bastille!" During his visit the foreign king seems to have gripped the imagination of the villagers, for "Charles Dicks," as he is called, is now given a place in the Valhalla of local legendary characters.



In 1789 Thomas Weld asked George III to grant him permission to build a Roman Catholic chapel in the grounds of Lulworth; the King gave his consent on condition that the building should look as little like a church as possible, the feeling against Roman Catholicism being very strong in Dorset at that time. Mr. Weld therefore made a design based on the plan of St. Sophia in Constantinople, circular in form, and increased by four sections of a circle to form a cross, and covered with a dome of lead. Consequently the first Roman Catholic chapel built in the south of England after the Reformation has the appearance of a heathen temple or a mausoleum! The interior too is Byzantine in style, and is richly painted. Above the altar there is a painting on the wall of Christ Enthroned, and above the statues on either side of it of Our Lady and the Sacred Heart are two pictures copied from Murillo's "Birth and Burial of Our Lord." The altar is of marble with ornaments of gilded bronze. Bishop Carroll, the first Roman Catholic Bishop of North America, was consecrated here in 1790, and Père Geon, an exiled priest of great sanctity and learning, is buried beneath the crypt. The coffins of many members of the Weld family rest in niches in the walls.

The Louterell or Luttrell Psalter is preserved, with many other ancient manuscripts, in the Weld family. The Psalter, which was made by the order of Sir Geoffrey Louterell in 1299, is written in "black letter" with beautifully illuminated capitals; the gold used in them is solid, and often diapered in dotted or burnished patterns. At the end of the Psalms for matins and before those for vespers there is a miniature representing a magnificent knight bearing the arms of the



Louterells and two ladies, probably Sir Geoffrey Louterell, Agnes his wife, and one of their daughters-in-law. The opposite page bears the legend "Dom. Galfridus Louterell me fieri fecit." The illustrations give an excellent idea of the manners and customs of the early part of the fourteenth century.

The original seal of the local Order of the Cistercians is another of the Welds' treasures; as is also the seal of William Weld, who was High Sheriff of London in 1352, and by whom Aldgate was built.

The parish church of St. Andrew is to the left of the castle, and is a picturesque little building in grey stone. Hutchins says the original church "was a very ancient fabric, built in the style of Norman architecture." The greater part of it, however, was taken down and rebuilt by Mr. Weld in 1788; in the previous year he caused to be removed "the coffins that were in the family vault under the church to the new catacombs he had made under the chapel, but permitted those under the pavement to remain as they were before.' The arms of the Welds still hang in the church, though their bones are removed. The tower is a fine specimen of Late Perpendicular architecture, and is notable for having buttresses at all four corners, instead of, as is usual, only at the outer ones.

Lulworth St. Andrew was once a manor, but is now a farm of about four hundred acres. In William the First's reign it belonged to the Earl of Mortain, and afterwards to the de Stokes of East Stoke; in Henry the Sixth's reign it passed to the Paynes; and in Edward the Fourth's it came to Thomas Knoyle, one of whose descendants sold it to the Newburghs, and it became a part of the Lulworth estate.

The name suggests that there was originally a church dedicated to St. Andrew near, and it is quite probable that a chapel of ease was built for the convenience of those for whom the walk to East Lulworth or East Stoke was too great.

In 1794 some monks of the Order of La Trappe were expelled from France and came to England on their way to Canada. Thomas Weld, having become acquainted with their Superior, invited them all to Lulworth, and built them a monastery which was dedicated to St. Susan. "That which gave to this locality a peculiar charm in the eyes of the brotherhood," says Hutchins, "and rendered it two-fold endearing, was its vicinity to the ruins of Bindon Abbey; and it appears that Mr. Weld intended at a later period, if death had not forestalled his designs, to rebuild these ruins and present to the monks the abbey restored to its primitive beauty and original destination."

The monks, not wishing to be idle, tried to farm the land that had been given to them; in this they were unsuccessful, and at Mr. Weld's suggestion undertook dairy work and market gardening, which occupations they pursued with advantage for some years. In 1813 this establishment was raised from the rank of a priory to that of an abbey. Shortly after this elevation the monks were regarded with the suspicion so frequently felt towards Roman Catholics at this period, which was intensified when one of their number threw off his habit and read the abjuration of his faith in Blandford parish church. In consequence of the commotion thus created, Lord Sidmouth informed the Abbot that the noviciate must be entirely confined to Frenchmen; the Abbot would

not conform to this restriction, saying that the English were as much his children as the French. Lord Sidmouth then told him that the brotherhood had only been tolerated as one of French refugees, and desired that they should return to France as soon as they conveniently could. In 1817 Louis XVIII gave the necessary permission, and on July 10th of that year the sixty monks embarked at Weymouth on their way to the monastery at Melderay, in Brittany, which had been purchased by the fraternity for their residence. The monastery farm has but few evidences of its history now—a touch of ecclesiasticism in its architecture, and a few plain tombstones which mark the graves of those silent monks who died there.

The small village of Wool is about four miles from East Lulworth; its most salient characteristic is a stream, which comes from the reservoir where the watercress grows, and appears in unexpected places—sometimes it runs in front of the cottages and forms a miniature moat, over which little bridges are placed opposite the various cottage doors. None of the rubble stone, so prevalent in Purbeck, is to be seen here, and there are no roofs made of slabs of stone; the cottages chiefly show an exterior of yellowish-white plaster, and the roofs that are not thatched are of tiles. Imposing buildings, such as the Oddfellows' Hall, the inn, and the chief shops are of red brick.

The church, which is at the east end of the village, is partly Early English and partly Perpendicular in style, and its chancel arch, which is in three divisions, is quite beautiful. The churchyard was for many generations the burying-place of the Turbervilles. But it is the beautiful manor-house, now



MANOR HOUSE, WOOL BRIDGE



CORFE CASTLE FROM REMESTONE HEATH





called Woolbridge Farm, that, since Hardy immortalised it as Wellbridge Farm, the scene of the honeymoon in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, has given Wool a claim to fame. The manor of Wool belonged to the Abbey of Bindon, and was granted in 1541 by Henry VIII to Lord Poynings, from whose brother Adrian it passed to the Turbervilles of Bere Regis. The house, which stands on the left bank of the Frome near Woolbridge, and can easily be seen from the station, was built by Sir John Turberville, who was sheriff of Dorset in 1652. The ancient house was garrisoned in 1644, and probably the present one was erected by Sir John when peace was restored.

Part of the farm now pays tithe to the rector of East Stoke.

A well-authenticated ghost story is connected with its neighbourhood. Two friends, both of whom were Turbervilles, some two centuries ago were driving in a large lumbering coach from Bere Regis to Wool. They quarrelled and at once got out and, as was the custom of the time, fought. One was killed. Ever since, the ghost of a coach has rumbled along the road from Bere to Wool at night; the noise it makes on its journey can be heard by any one, but the vehicle can only be seen by those who have Turberville blood in their veins. The last person who saw it was, Mr. Windle<sup>1</sup> tells us, a gentleman who did not know the legend, but was connected with the Turberville family.

After recrossing the bridge and returning to Wool station, the first road to the left leads to Bindon Abbey.

The Cistercian Abbey of Great Bindon was founded, as we have already seen, by Roger Newburgh and Matilda his

<sup>1</sup> In *The Wessex of Thomas Hardy*.

wife in 1172. The patronage remained in the Newburgh family till 1271, when Henry de Newburgh by a charter gave the abbot and monks licence to choose whom they pleased for their patron; they chose Queen Eleanor and Henry de Newburgh himself and his heirs. At the Dissolution the abbey with Wool manor was given by Henry VIII to Lord Poynings, from whom it came to the Howards, who eventually sold it to Humphrey Weld.

The ruins of Bindon Abbey are inexpressibly beautiful. Entered through a massive gateway, they first seem to be standing in the midst of an old garden. On the left stands the house, possibly built on the site of the abbot's dwelling, which has a small Roman Catholic chapel on the first floor, reached by a flight of stairs from the garden. On the right a stream or moat flows past the ruins. Though few of the walls reach the height of ten feet, and most of them only rise three or four feet above the ground, outlines of every part of the church and the cloisters can be clearly traced. The Cistercians invariably laid out their monasteries on a defined plan, and this is the most perfect one that exists in the country. Some flat and ancient tombstones bearing traces of the words and symbols once inscribed upon them lie where the chapter-house formerly stood, and one or two are near the high altar. The stone coffin lying on the ground in the chancel is the one in which Hardy makes Angel Clare deposit Tess the night after their wedding.

Beyond the ruins of the abbey is a pool, filled from the stream from the reservoir already mentioned; within this pool is an island, in the centre of which is a large mound once doubtless the site of the Calvary; the top of the mound is

reached by a flight of stone steps, and water lies at its base on three sides. It is said that a subterranean path connects this mound with the manor-house. The island and the abbey grounds are thickly wooded, and no more sheltered and peaceful scene could be imagined. A little to the north of the ruins there is the old mill described in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* as the place where Angel Clare studied the science of milling. The abbey has been described by Mrs. J. E. Panton in the following verses :—

These are not ruins only, though long years  
Have glided gently past this broken door—  
Have twined thick ivy with its nested store  
Of new-fledged warblers where, bowed down with fears,  
Knelt long ago, dissolved in bitter tears,  
Sad mourners praying for calm peace once more—  
Yet still remains hid in the heart's true core  
The faith that in a wider church appears.  
All, all are dead ! the stolèd priests are gone,  
The sad nuns hurrying to their ceaseless prayers,  
The chanting choristers with lifted cross,  
And where the altar in its radiance shone,  
A shattered stone lies low : the broken stairs  
That lead us nowhere, gleam with slipping moss.

## CHAPTER VIII

### EAST STOKE, HOLME, AND WAREHAM

"Theirs was a greatness  
Got from their Grandsires—  
Theirs that so often in  
Strife with their enemies

Struck for their hoards and their hearths and their homes."

TENNYSON.

**A**FTER leaving Bindon, Holme Lane, narrow and winding, bordered with high hedgerows and tall trees, wends eastward. About two miles beyond the abbey a cross-road is reached; the track on the right leads to East Lulworth, and the one on the left, which is flanked by the small stream called Luckford Lake, leads to East Stoke, a small hamlet half a mile away on the other side of the river. East Stoke itself is outside Purbeck; but as its parish contains several manors within the island, a few words must be said about it. The church was built in 1828, and for the convenience of the parishioners a situation close to the high road from Wareham to Wool was chosen. The relics of the original church, a thirteenth-century edifice which stood in a meadow at the west end of the parish, are two arches, part of the walls, the porch with the holy-water stoup, and the hexagon-shaped basin of the font. The chancel of the church, though small, is very beautiful, and there are some fine windows.



OLD MILL, WAREHAM





The parish of East Stoke, which contains Bestwall, Lulworth St. Andrew, Belhuish, and part of Stoborough, was probably the particular Stoke, one of eight, that was held in demesne in William the First's reign by the Earl of Mortain. Before the Conquest it belonged to Edmer, and was taxed for two hides and had a mill worth fifty shillings. After Mortain it came to the de Lincoln family and then to the Fitz-Paynes, from whom it descended to a family that took its name from the place, the de Stokes, a family that has figured frequently in this story of Purbeck. Eustachius de Stokes, like Henry de la Pomerai, joined Prince John's rebellion against Richard I during the latter's imprisonment, and consequently on the King's return was fined heavily. The Stokes, Estokes, or Estoks, as they were variously called, lived quietly at East Stoke, with apparently no more thrilling events in their lives than marriage and small lawsuits till the reign of Edward II, when William Stokes, in 1321, was appointed one of the collectors of scutage in the county of Dorset. Three years later he was knighted, and "summoned by general proclamation to attend the great council at Westminster." He eventually became a Conservator of the Peace and a Commissioner in the army. After his death he was succeeded by his son, who, dying without children, divided the estate between his two sisters—Alice, who married John Chauntmarl, and Sibila, whose husband's name is not recorded. Alice Chauntmarl's descendants Joan and Christine, who married respectively John Cheverell and John Jurdon, eventually inherited the estate. A partition of the Stoke property was made, the Cheverells having East Stoke and the Jurdons Bestwall and Stoborough. The Trenchards of

Crichel were descended from the Jurdons. The Cheverells lived at East Stoke till 1586, when Christopher Cheverell sold the manor to Sir John Strode. The property is now divided between Mr. Bond, Professor Hudleston, and several other landowners in the neighbourhood.

On returning to Holme Lane one finds the few cottages called Luckford, which take their name from the stream that forms the western boundary of Purbeck.

A little further on the demesne of West Holme, the first place we have seen since Worbarrow that is within the confines of the island, is reached. In Edward the Confessor's time the manor belonged to a Saxon whose name was Eldred, and after the Conquest to Walter de Clavell, of whom much has been said. In 1411 it was in the possession of Masters Chyke, More, Fry, and Burdon, the husbands of John Russell's four daughters and heirs. After this, says Hutchins, we find no account of the lords of this place till 1586, when Mr. Treswell, in his map of the Isle of Purbeck, says it belonged to one of the Newburghs and William Gould. The Goulds alienated the farm of West Holme to Mr. Strode, from whom it descended to Sir Henry Oglander. It now belongs to Professor Hudleston. A parcel of West Holme called Crocker's tenement was not bought by the Strodes, but remained in the possession of the Goulds. In 1799 the Rt. Hon. Nathaniel Bond of East Holme purchased it from a yeoman, and since then it has been held with and passes as East Holme Farm.

East Holme is a small parish which joins that of East Stoke, and contains heaths and woodlands belonging to both Stoke and Wareham. It is probably the Holme held before



On the Frorne  
near Helme I.W.G.B.

CREECH BARROW, FROM HOLME





the Conquest by Edric, one of the King's thegns, for 20s. Afterwards it became the property of Alured de Lincoln, who appears to have given it in frankalmoigne to the Priory of Montacute, in Somersetshire. After the dissolution of the monasteries it was given by Edward VI to the Duke of Somerset, on whose attainder it was granted for £337 to John Hannam of Wimborne Minster and his heirs, to be held *in capite* by service of the fortieth part of a knight's fee. The estate remained in the Hannam family till 1696, when it became the property of Gabriel Odingsells of Wells. His children sold it in 1722 to Denis Bond of Grange, from whom it descended to the present owner.

East Holme Farm House is quaint and charming, with a beautiful garden that adjoins the pleasaunce of Holme Priory. Holme Priory, half a mile south of the farm, is a large Georgian house of white stone which stands in the midst of a small park. It derives its name from the fact that it is built on the site of an ancient Cluniac priory. One of the window-frames is of Ham Hill stone from Montacute.

The priory was of the Cluniac Order, being a cell of the Priory of Montacute, in Somersetshire, that was founded by William, Earl of Mortain, in Henry the First's reign. There is no precise information with regard to the date of the foundation of Holme Priory, but it was certainly before 1291. It is generally supposed that it owed its existence to one of the de Lincoln family, as there is a document extant which states that the Prior of Holme must find "four monks to chant throughout the year for the souls of Alured de Lincoln and his progenitors." In a grant to William de

Montacute, Earl of Sarum, of the advowson of the Priory of Montacute, and the custody and advowson of the cell of Holme, it is stated that the latter had belonged to the former from "time immemorial," therefore the cell of Holme must have been given to the Priory of Montacute at its foundation. After the Reformation a neighbouring clergyman officiated for a salary of £10. In 1650 the "impropriation belonged to Thomas Hannam, Esq., and was worth £15 per annum, which sum he allowed to Thomas Durnford, clerk, to supply the cure." As we have already seen, some of the remains of the building were taken in 1746 by Denis Bond, Esq., to build the small church at Grange.

In the grounds of Holme Priory there is a pool which surrounds an island thickly grown with aquatic flowers and creeping plants, known as the Monks' Pond. Near it in the early thirties a massive gold ring was found by a gardener. The ring, which is unusually large, probably adorned the forefinger of one of the priors. The seal is a lion rampant, langued, armed and crowned, probably the prior's armorial bearings, and the initials in front of the lion and in the curve of his tail may have indicated the prior's name. The subject of the engraving has worn almost to the point of invisibility, but there can still be discerned on one side near the seal a representation of the Persons of the Holy Trinity, on the other side the Blessed Virgin Mary with the Infant Christ, and at the back of the ring, very faintly engraved, St. Christopher carrying Christ upon his shoulders.

There is a small church in the grounds built and endowed by Nathaniel Bond, Esq. I am able to quote an account of

its consecration in 1866 from a contemporary number of the *Dorset Chronicle*:—

“The building, which is of Early English style of architecture . . . consists of a nave and chancel, with a vestry on the north and a porch on the south. The whole exterior walls are built of red sandstone quarried on the estate, except the quoins and dressings of the windows, which are of stone from Ham Hill. The interior arches are of Bath and Ham Hill stone in alternate courses, having a very pleasing effect, and these rest upon columns of Purbeck marble. The roof is an open timber one, and is covered with Purbeck stone tiles. A projection at the west end, pierced with the windows, affords support for a pretty little bell turret, and space for a kind of ringing chamber. . . Running round the interior is a bold cornice of Bath stone, beautifully carved in floriated pattern; the corbels in the nave have small Purbeck marble shafts terminating in bosses, some of them bearing shields, with coats of arms, being those of the successive owners of the estate, commencing with that of Alured de Lincoln, by whom it was conveyed to the Priory of Montacute, and terminating with the present owner. These, as well as the illuminated texts in other parts of the building, are the work of Lady Selina Bond, who displayed great taste in this labour of love.”

The following inscription is carved in stone in the cornice of the chancel:—

“This church was erected A.D. 1865, to the Glory of God, and in Memory of Denis William Bond, obit January 23rd 1863.”

The corbels in this part represent angels. The two first bear scrolls:—

1. “Holy Holy Holy Lord God!”
2. “We praise Thee O God!”

In 1857 some barrows on the northern extremity of Holme Heath were opened, two of which were found to contain urns carefully wedged in with flints and covered with sandstone. The Rev. J. H. Austin, in the columns of the Purbeck papers for 1860, says that they were tombs of the aboriginal population of the south-east of Dorset, who inhabited the country that lies between Poole Harbour and the River Stour in one direction, and the River Frome and the chalk in another.

This part of Holme Heath, called "Battle Plain," exhibits one of the wildest views in the island. From a gate nearly opposite the priory one can see an expanse of uncultivated moorland bounded by hills. Not a building nor any sign of civilisation can be seen. A little to the south-east there is a small hill called Holme Mount, upon which there is a ruined fortification. There is another hill close by of similar size and shape, and the twin points are visible for miles. Red sandstone is found near this hill, and in Edward the First's reign it was used to build parts of Corfe Castle.

Holme Lane terminates in the road from Stoborough to Grange. The village of Stoborough is situated at the junction of the Corfe and Grange roads; it only contains a few thatched cottages and two inns, but in summer the abundance of flowers that trail over the cottages and fill the small gardens give it an additional charm. Stoborough is said—though there is but little foundation for the report—to have been the mother town of Wareham. It had a mayor of its own till 1714.

Part of Stoborough is in East Stoke, and part in the parish of Holy Trinity, Wareham, and its history is practically the same as that of East Stoke. It was bought from





STOBOKUCHI

Stalio's JNGE





the Rivers family by Lord Eldon in 1850. A very considerable tannery business was carried on there formerly, but now most of the inhabitants work at the adjacent clay pits.

About a mile beyond Stoborough, along a straight flat road, we find again the River Frome, cross its old grey bridge, and once more leaving Purbeck behind us enter the outskirts of Wareham.

Wareham has been called the gate of Purbeck, and the name is good, for it was from that town that the islanders held communication with the outer world and also obtained provisions. Situated as it is between two rivers and flanked with its wonderful ancient ramparts, Wareham is one of the most picturesque old towns in England. Until towards the close of the fourteenth century it was a seaport town holding a position both politically and geographically similar to that of Southampton. The sea washed its walls on the southern side, the estuary of the Frome extended to Stoborough and that of the Puddle to about where the station now stands. Since then the sea has retreated and the estuaries have narrowed themselves into the rivers which now flank the town.

The town is built in the shape of a cross, and is surrounded by high walls or earthworks, parts of which look very much like railway embankments. A particularly high rampart on the west is called Bloody Bank, and is said to have been the scene of the execution of criminals and of many political offenders. The almost circular space at its base on the inside was probably a Roman amphitheatre; it is now used as a place for outdoor services on summer Sunday evenings.

As well as for its ancient walls Wareham was renowned for its eight churches, only three of which now remain. Holy Trinity was the parish church, but having fallen into decay it has been restored and converted into a parish room; the present rectory of Wareham was formerly the rectory of Holy Trinity. St. Nicholas at Arne is a chapel of ease to it, and the rector must see that service is performed there every Sunday. Lady St. Mary's, a beautiful church by the side of the River Frome, is now the parish church; it is large and well proportioned, and full of interest. South of the chancel is the little Norman chapel built on the site of the tomb where the body of Edward the Martyr lay before it was translated to Shaftesbury. The King's marble coffin lies at the west end of the church near the Norman font. The two effigies in marble of knights in armour in the chancel are of Sir William and Sir Henry d'Estoke, one of whom was slain in battle on Wareham Bridge, owing to the fact that a swarm of bees got inside his helmet. There are two double piscinæ, one in the east wall of the north transept and the other in the south wall of the chancel. The church contains some very old stones, with legends in an ancient tongue inscribed upon them. The most noticeable is embedded in the wall at the end of the north aisle, and bears letters of which, according to Mr. John Rhys, Professor of Celtic at Oxford, the whole reading would be "Cattug C . . . . [fi]lius Gideonis." Mr. A. Owen (in *Arch. Cam.*, 1874) says this stone affords most important evidence of the existence of a British Christian church on the spot early in the fifth century. Many religious people in British history bore the name Cattug, the most important being: (1) a mis-

sionary from Gaul, who came to eradicate the Pelagian heresy from the Church in this country, and who *may* have built a church or founded a school at Wareham; and (2) a Welsh saint, with whom Mr. C. E. Robinson associates this inscription. Quite near the "Cattug" stone is another, which bears the device "Gongorie." In speaking of this, Professor Rhys says: "'Gongorie,' the genitive feminine (Gongoriæ) of a name Gongorie, which I am sorry to say I have never met with anywhere else. De Comines' *Cartulaire de Redon* has (p. 395) an 'Ecclesia Sancti Guengari,' in Brittany. This would make the Wareham name look a sort of Latin feminine of Guengar." Just above this there is a Crucifixion with the Blessed Virgin and St. John. The figures are almost worn away, but the cross is still distinguishable.

Other stones bearing hieroglyphics of apparently similar date are found in the miniature chapel in the buttress and the south-east corner of the sacrarium, which is dedicated to St. Thomas à Becket, also in King Edward's Chapel, and in the porch at the west end of the south aisle. Professor Rhys, while surmising that these inscriptions are in Old Welsh, wonders how and when Welsh names came there. As there is no whole word on either of the stones, a definite description of their language and meaning can hardly be expected.

A coloured window in the south aisle represents St. Birinus, here called St. Berin, who converted the people of Dorset; St. Aldhelm, with a representation of St. Martin's Church in his hand; King Alfred, whose daughter built the priory just outside the window; and King Edward the Martyr holding the cup and dagger. Near the pulpit are two

stone blocks said to be parts of altars on which Roman soldiers worshipped Roman gods. These stones are probably sixteen hundred years old. There is a tablet in St. Edward's Chapel to the memory of Hutchins, the historian of Dorset, who was rector of Wareham.

St. Martin's Church, which was built by St. Aldhelm in 701, stands at the North Port. Originally the church contained a miniature chancel with a small window on each side and a little square nave with a door on each side. In the thirteenth century the building was enlarged and the north aisle was built, two arches supported by pillars of Purbeck marble taking the place of the north wall, and the nave was made a few feet longer. The windows, with the exception of the little Saxon one on the north side of the chancel, are Perpendicular in style. The chancel arch, probably of Norman date, is flanked by two hagioscopes.

When the greater part of Wareham was destroyed by fire in 1762 this church was fitted up to receive the poor and homeless. Traces of their fireplace at the east end of the chancel can still be seen.

Bertric, King of the West Saxons, who accidentally drank a cup of poisoned wine that his wife had prepared for his friend, of whom she was jealous, is said to have been buried beneath the church.

The site of St. John's Church is now occupied by the Police Station, and the Town Hall stands where St. Peter's used to be, whilst houses have been built on the site of All Saints and St. Nicholas. The old Almshouse, a quaint, dilapidated building in East Street, was founded, as a tablet over the door assures us, "time immemorial for the main-



tenance of six ancient men and five ancient women." The charity which endows the Almshouse owns the part of Swanage where the Grand Hotel stands.

The site of the castle can be seen from the Frome Bridge ; nothing remains, but a green mound marks the place, and coal-sheds occupy the situation by the river on which the mint once stood.

Wareham, called by the British *Durngueis*, and by the Saxons *Thornsæta*, is of very great antiquity ; it is said to be one of twenty British towns destroyed by the Romans ; many writers, notably Mr. Bellows and Mr. George J. Bennett, have thought that the town of Wareham was built by the Romans, probably during the Claudian invasion. In defence of their views the fact is cited that the original plan of Wareham was the same as that of Gloucester, which is again similar to the *Castra Crastinana* in Rome, and also Dion Cassius's statement that the Roman legions made their head-quarters at the Isle of Wight and landed at three different places, of which Southampton and Portsmouth were two ; Poole Harbour with Wareham at its head would naturally be the third.

The walls, which are earthworks, and not of stone, have been the cause of controversy amongst antiquaries, some believing them to be of British or Roman origin, others thinking they are of Saxon or Danish construction.

Mr. Baxter and Dr. Stukeley believe Wareham to be the *Moriconium* mentioned by *Ravennas*. There is a Roman road from Wareham to Dorchester, and Wareham is the nearest place at which the Romans could have disembarked for Gloucester. *Vespasian* is said to have landed at Ham-

worthy, then called Moriconium, which is only a few miles from Wareham, which stands quite near Icknield Street. A Roman altar was found at Wareham, and a pavement at Furzebrook, near Grange. So there is no room to doubt that Wareham was occupied by the Romans.

In the time of the Heptarchy Wareham was one of the most important towns in Wessex, and, as was said above, Bertric, the last king of the West Saxons, was buried there.

During the many Danish invasions, Wareham was frequently harried, and occasionally taken. Its strategical position was obviously appreciated by the Danes, for Cnut made it his head-quarters in Wessex, and when he divided his kingdom he kept this portion for himself.

In the middle of the ninth century, after a protracted war between the Saxons under King Ethelwolf and the Danes, the latter were victorious, and few Saxons were left alive to defend Wareham against Guthrum in 876. It was therefore easily taken by the Danes, who, having massacred or driven away the inhabitants, reduced the town to a mass of ruins and destroyed the nunnery. King Alfred marched to relieve Wareham, and the Danes, finding themselves unable to cope with the large force of Saxons, entered into a treaty binding themselves to leave the kingdom. They very soon broke the treaty, however, and some seizing the King's horses marched to Exeter, while the remainder embarked in the hundred and twenty ships that were destroyed by Saxons, aided by the elements, near Swanage Bay.

The town was rebuilt, and in Athelstan's reign it again prospered. The King gave it two mints and two mint masters. Coins were made at Wareham from this time till

the reign of Henry I, but no mention is made of the mints being worked later.

Ethelred, stepbrother of the murdered Edward, paid the Danes to cease their ravages, and for a short time Saxon and Dane lived together fairly peaceably; but Ethelred, not contented with peace without revenge, conceived and carried out the horrible idea of massacring the Danes on the eve of St. Brice's Day.

Sweyn, King of Denmark, and Cnut, afterwards called the Great, came to England as avengers; "all southern England was alight with the blaze of burning towns," and Wareham was again reduced to ashes.

In spite of its dilapidations, William I elected to keep Wareham as a demesne of the Crown; and as the old castle had been destroyed in 786, he built a new one on the same place, and used to a great extent the old material in rebuilding.

After his futile rebellion against his brother, Henry I, in 1104, Robert of Normandy was imprisoned in Wareham Castle. His friend and follower, Robert de Belesme, Earl of Montgomery, sometime Louis the Sixth's ambassador to England, was imprisoned there, and moreover starved to death.

When the war between Stephen and Maud broke out, Wareham, which sided with the Empress, was again in the heart of the fray. Robert, Earl of Gloucester, Henry the First's illegitimate son, commanded Maud's forces. While he was abroad trying to obtain aid from the Earl of Anjou (Maud's second husband), Stephen surprised and took Wareham Castle, burnt the town and made Hubert de Lacy

Governor. In 1142 Robert came back, bringing Prince Henry with him, and not knowing what had happened, tried to land, having only three or four hundred men and fifty-two ships. However, after three months' siege he retook the castle, and made his son William Governor. Prince Henry stayed till 1146, and then left for Anjou. In the same year Gloucester took Lulworth Castle.

King John visited Wareham several times; Louis VI of France stayed there June–July, 1116; and Edward III came here to superintend shipbuilding in 1347. Peter of Pomfret, who was imprisoned in Corfe for his disloyal prophecy that John would be deposed by the following Ascension Day, was dragged with horses up and down the streets of Wareham, and also between Corfe Castle and Wareham, and at last with his son was hanged here on the part of the west wall now called Bloody Bank.

When the Civil War broke out in the seventeenth century, Wareham was again a military station. In 1642 it was garrisoned for the Parliament. Shortly afterwards it was taken by the King's forces, but after the action of Holme Bridge it again fell to the Parliamentarians. In 1644 a troop of Royalists under Colonel Ashburton took it at break of day, and Colonel O'Brien was made Governor. In August of the same year Colonel William and his brother Major Francis Sydenham besieged it and the garrison surrendered.

A great fire destroyed the town in 1762, and a fund was raised to rebuild it; so, to quote Hutchins, "about two years after the town rose fairer than before."

The manor of Wareham at the time of the Conquest belonged to the Crown, whence it came to the Bellomonts,

Earls of Leicester, and from them to their descendants the Clares, Earls of Gloucester and Hertford. In 1361, in an inquisition made at Cranborne on the death of Lady Elizabeth Dame of Clare, it is shown that she had owned Wareham. Nothing further is heard of it till 1487, when the manor was granted by Henry VII, "amonge other, to oure sovereign lady the Quene for her dower." In the next reign it was granted to Queen Jane Seymour; then, with Knowle Steeple and Creech, to Queen Katharine Howard in 1540 and to Queen Katharine Parr in 1543.

From this time until 1609 it remained Crown property. In that year, however, James I granted it to Thomas Emmerson and Richard Cowdal and their heirs, but the King retained the fishing in the two rivers. Emmerson and Cowdal sold the manor to several citizens of Wareham, and between 1634 and 1681 the Plunkets of Westminster and Fulham purchased it all. From that family it was bought in 1697 by Thomas Erle of Charborough for £242. 9s. In 1717 Mr. Erle granted "the premises" in trust to Sir Edward Ernelly and the magistrates of Wareham. The income was to be used for the "binding out" as apprentices of poor boys born in the borough, to be nominated by Mr. Erle and his successors. In 1734 Henry Drax, Esq., bought the manor from the surviving trustee, and in 1767 his son sold it to John Calcraft, Esq.

Wareham has been a borough certainly since the Conquest, and is so described in *Domesday Book*. It received a charter of liberties from Queen Elizabeth in 1585, and another from Queen Anne in 1703.

Wareham Castle stood at the south-west angle of the



town; the original edifice was probably built by the Romans; some writers suggest that it was first built for a villa. In any case, it was a strong fortification in Saxon times. It was demolished by the Danes in 876, and was rebuilt by William I. It was an important factor in the wars between Stephen and Maud. A garrison was put in by King John in 1216, and from that time nothing more is heard of it. The site of the castle was granted to Sir Christopher Hatton, and from him passed, with Corfe, to the Bankes family.

The priory, of which there are still some remains by the river near St. Mary's Church, is now a dwelling-house. It is one of the most ancient religious buildings in the country, and is said to have been founded by St. Aldhelm. Originally a nunnery, it was destroyed by the Danes and restored probably by a daughter of King Alfred. After being again reduced to ruins it was given by Richard Bellomont, with other churches and lands, to the Abbot of Lyre, who rebuilt it and changed it to a Benedictine monastery. It followed the usual course of alien monasteries, and was given by Henry V to the Carthusian monastery at Shene. It was suppressed at the Dissolution, though not particularly mentioned. In 1850 the site and ruins were bought by Lord Eldon from Sir William Pitt.

A road which branches from the Corfe road at Stoborough leads to Arne. After winding through flat heathland for almost four miles, it stops at a tiny church which stands in the shadow of a large farm and forms the nucleus of a group of cottages. A cart-track leads onwards to Poole Harbour. Arne is one of the most out-of-the-world places that it is

possible to imagine, and though cold and bleak in winter, it is a paradise of solitude in summer.

The church, small and old, dating from about 1220, has one remarkable feature—an ancient marble altar-slab with five crosses upon it. When the powers in authority decreed that all “altars” should be detached, and movable “communion tables” placed in their stead, this slab was put into the floor of the chancel; comparatively recently it has been taken up and placed upon a wooden base, where it fulfils its original purpose.

The wonderfully embroidered linen cloth given to the chapel shortly after the Rebellion by Mr. William Wake, rector of Holy Trinity, Wareham, and which was kept in Arne in Hutchins’s day, has now disappeared, as have so many antiquities of Purbeck during recent years.

Arne is not mentioned in *Domesday Book*, being part of Wareham. In Richard the Second’s reign it is described as belonging to the Abbey of Shaftesbury. In 1553 it was granted, with the neighbouring parish of Slepe, to Edward Neville, Esq., who in 1564 alienated it to the Cadbury family, from whom it passed to William Pitt, from whom it descended to Lord Rivers, from whom Lord Eldon bought it in 1850.

## CHAPTER IX

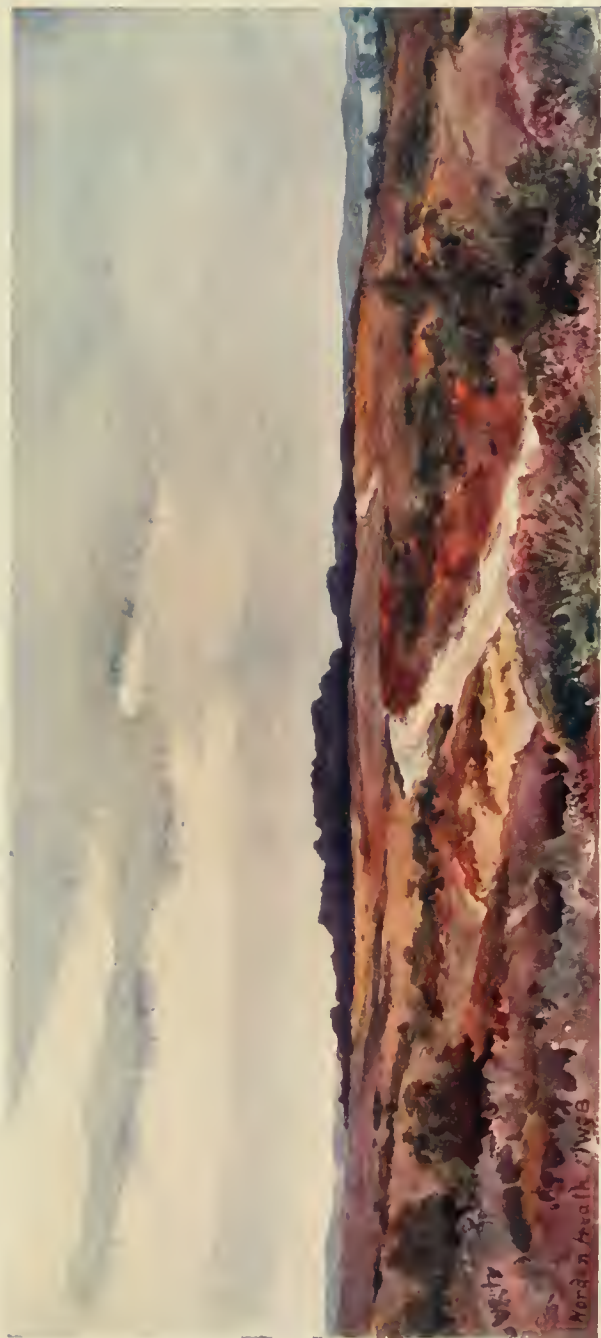
### CORFE CASTLE

“All was ruinous.

Here stood a shatter'd archway plumed with fern ;  
And here had fall'n a great part of a tower,  
Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the cliff,  
And like a crag was gay with wilding flowers :  
And high above a piece of turret stair,  
Worn by the feet that now were silent, wound  
Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-stems  
Claspt the gray walls with hairy-fibred arms,  
And suck'd the joining of the stones, and look'd  
A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.”—TENNYSON.

**C**ORFE (Corvesgate—A.S. *ceorfan*, to cut; *gaet*, *gedt*, *gát*, a gate or gap) is one of the oldest boroughs in England, and though its proportions suggest a village, it is really a town. Formerly it was represented in Parliament by two members, now it is merely a part of the East Dorset constituency.

The town, which is pierced by the white Swanage road, contains a church, a manor-house, a guild-hall, and a cluster of grey stone cottages ; inns and shops can be put under the last heading, as the former are only distinguishable by their sign-boards, and the latter by the wares displayed in their small windows. But Corfe town is so completely dominated and overshadowed by its castle that it is impossible to take



NORDEN HEATH





any interest in the town until the ruined fortress has been explored.

The hill, which is crowned by the ruins of the castle, is small and of almost pyramidal shape; it stands in a gap in the Purbeck Hills, with the height called Brenscombe Hill on the east and Knowle Hill on the west. Two streams, the Wiken and the Byle, flow respectively by the east and west sides of the castle hill, and to add to the strength of the situation a canal was cut on the south side so that their waters would join and form a moat. This moat was formerly spanned by a drawbridge. Now the channel is dry, and a stone bridge, supported by seven circular arches, leads to the gate of the castle.

The outer entrance comprises two round towers, greatly dilapidated, between which the broken arch of the gateway stretches; an iron gate prevents a nearer approach of carriages, and pedestrians must pass through a wicket at the side. The last time the iron gate was opened was in 1814, when Princess Charlotte visited Corfe. Amidst much anxiety on the part of her suite and the Right Hon. George Banks, M.P., who acted as cicerone, the Princess's carriage was driven across the narrow bridge, through the gate, and across the first ward nearly as far as St. Edward's Gate. After seeing the ruins she was driven back along the perilous path, and then took luncheon at the inn then called the "Ship"—now the "Banks Arms." As it was St. Luke's Day, the Princess had the additional pleasure of watching the annual fair from the inn windows.

The outer gate leads to the first ward, an almost triangular piece of greensward, with the gate as apex, the castle ditch as

base, and broken walls, fortified by ruined towers, on each side. This, the largest ward, was used as a tilting-ground or place of arms. The tower nearest the whilom ditch on the west side of the ward is called the Pembroke Tower, because its north wall bears a shield, supported by two hands, on which arms, formerly said to be those of the great Earl Marshal, are sculptured. More recent research, however, shows them to be those of Alan de Plunkenet, who was Constable of the castle in 1269.

A bridge which spans the north end of the quondam inner moat leads to the inner gate, called after St. Edward, king and martyr, who was murdered near it. The round towers which flank this gate are a criterion of the strength of the castle masonry. When the castle was to be blown up, the towers were undermined and gunpowder ignited beneath them. One tower appears to have remained firm, but the other dropped nine feet; the only part of the masonry that gave way was the crown of the arch, which broke in two.

A little beyond the gate is a flight of stairs of very ancient date, rebuilt in 1235, which ascends to the keep, and used to form a private entrance to the castle for royalties and persons of great importance. It was the old staircase that Elfrida is said to have descended to meet King Edward, whom she commanded to be stabbed as he sat on his horse near the gate.

The second or dungeon ward, entered from the Martyr's Gate, is, like the first, of almost triangular shape. At the western apex stands the remains of the Butavant Tower, which contained the dungeon in which royal and important military prisoners were lodged. It suffered greatly from

the "slighting"; only two of its eight sides remain, and they are in a battered condition. On the north side of the ward stands what remains of the prison chapel, and opposite it—one of the most interesting objects in the castle—the wall of what is called the chapel of St. Aldhelm. The beautiful herring-bone work of this wall leaves no doubt as to its antiquity, and Thomas Bond, Esq., after carefully excavating the locality, concluded that the wall was undoubtedly part of a church or chapel, and inclined to the opinion that it was the one erected by St. Aldhelm.<sup>1</sup> Just near this wall is a sunk tower, said to have been the residence of the jailer, and probably the place of execution.

From this ward a path winds upward to the plateau, where all that is left of the castle itself stands. The keep and most of this important building are on the southern side, while the northern contains the third ward or Guard Court.

The fourth ward or Priest's Court, on the boundary of which stood the Priest's Tower, probably contained at the eastern end the garden. The most imposing block of building, still having a short flight of stairs, a corridor, and some small rooms in a state of preservation, is the keep or King's Tower. The basements of this tower also were used as dungeons. Almost in the middle of the castle stood the kitchens and the banqueting-hall, and south of this a fairly well-preserved building of Early Saxon period, called in Treswell's plan the Queen's Tower, thought by some antiquarians to be St. Mary's Chapel. According to the sheriff's records, its chaplain received in the reigns of Henry III and

<sup>1</sup> Some antiquaries doubt this, as "herring-bone" work continued to be executed till the middle Norman period of architecture.

Edward I a yearly stipend of 50s. The Queen's Tower was probably situated a little more to the north-west. The bastion tower at the south-east angle of the castle was probably the one commonly called La Gloriette.

It is locally supposed that the plate and treasure thrown down by Lady Bankes when Corfe Castle was taken by treachery are still hidden in the depths of the well near the keep.

Having to some extent described the castle as it now stands, and shown which of the broken walls and ruined towers were in its happier days keep, chapel, or prison, I will now tell its story from the time a Saxon "tun" was built on this hill until the emissaries of the Parliament wrecked the strong castle in the seventeenth century, a period of nearly a thousand years.

The actual date of the beginning of Corfe is obscure. The first building erected on the hill in the chasm between the two ranges was probably a Saxon tun or manor.<sup>1</sup>

In his *Story of Corfe Castle* the Right Hon. George Bankes, M.P., says that as King Alfred founded Shaftesbury Abbey, which was constantly connected in history with the castle, and as the abbesses (Alfred's daughter Ethelgiva was the first) had rights and privileges connected with it, there is reason to believe that it was in existence during that king's reign.

The castle, then consisting probably of a single fortified tower, is first mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon charter in a cartulary of Shaftesbury Abbey, and the first date connected with it is 948, when, as a part of the manor of Kingston, it

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hutchins, Moule, Bankes, T. Bond, etc.



was granted with seven other manors by King Edred to Ælfryth, a religious woman, Abbess of Shaftesbury. It is sometimes said to have been built by King Edgar, but it is more likely that it was fortified and embellished by him; it must have been a residence of importance to have satisfied Elfrida as a dower-house.

The tragic event of March, 978, brought Corfe for the first time before the footlights of the stage of history. When Edgar died in 975, his eldest son Edward was proclaimed king, much to the annoyance of the Queen Dowager. It is difficult to see how Elfrida could have expected anything else; the only argument she had was that Edward's mother, King Edgar's first wife, had died before her husband ascended the throne, and so was never queen, while she herself had been crowned before the birth of Ethelred. But as jealous women are not guided by logic, the question of the validity of her reasons may be passed over, and only the fact related that she was furious because her stepson, and not her son, wore the crown.

Four years elapsed, and Edward became popular, particularly with the clergy, and was supported by the great St. Dunstan. In March, 978, while hunting in the Forest of Purbeck, the King rode to Corfe to see his stepmother. She was very gracious, and when he left offered him a stirrup-cup; while he was drinking, one of her attendants murdered him—some old writers say she stabbed him herself while she kissed him. When he felt that he was wounded he spurred his horse and tried to ride away, but before he got far he fell off, and was dragged down the hill. The horse stopped of its own accord at the bridge over the river at the foot of the hill.



When Elfrida's confidential servant came he found the King quite dead. In order to avoid suspicion they took him at the Queen's command to a neighbouring cottage, which belonged to a blind old woman. At midnight a bright light filled the cottage, and the woman's sight was restored. On hearing of this miracle the Queen was afraid, and ordered the King's body to be thrown into a well. Afterwards the well yielded pure, sweet water, which healed the infirm and the blind. It was called St. Edward's Fountain, and can be seen to this day.

When Ethelred expressed his horror at his mother's barbarous conduct, she whipped him with some large tapers—nothing else being at hand—and to the end of his life he hated the sight of a candle!

Eleven months after King Edward's murder a column of fire directed some devout people of Wareham to where the body lay. They found it and buried it quietly in St. Mary's Church at Wareham. But the news spread, and Dunstan and Edward's friend, Alfer, Earl of Mercia, arranged that the royal remains should be buried with all honour at Shaftesbury Abbey. They invited bishops, abbots, and nobles to attend, and sent to Wolfrida, Abbess of Wilton, telling her to come to the great man's funeral with the maidens committed to her care "*ad peragendas exequias*." Hutchins's translation "*to perform the exequies*" of Bromton's expression "*ad peragendas exequias*" is perhaps misleading, as the old chronicler does not suggest that the Abbess was asked to do anything unusual, but that, no doubt as having been intimately connected with King Edward, she was bidden to this grand ceremony, where she and her nuns would in all

probability bear an important part in the procession and the musical part of the service.

As the cortège passed from Wareham to Shaftesbury two lame men who touched the bier were healed. Owing to the manner of this King's death and his affection for the Church, he was canonised and given the title of Martyr. Three festivals were appointed in his honour, the anniversaries of the death and the two burials. Elfrida wished to attend the funeral, but her horse insisted on going backwards, and even on foot she was unable to proceed. This seems to have made her realise her guilt, for she thereupon founded two nunneries, one at Amesbury, in Wiltshire, and the other at Whorwell, in Hampshire. At the latter she took the habit, and after many years of penitence and austerity died. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* gives an account of King Edward's assassination in metre, of which the following is a translation :—

There has not been 'mid Angles  
a worse deed done  
than this was  
since they first  
Britain-land sought.  
Men him murdered,  
but God him glorified.  
He was in life  
an earthly king ;  
he is now after death  
a heavenly saint.  
Him would not his earthly  
kinsmen avenge,  
but him hath his Heavenly Father  
greatly avenged.  
The earthly murderers  
would his memory

on earth blot out  
but the lofty Avenger  
hath his memory  
in the heavens  
and on earth wide spread.  
They who would not erewhile  
to his living  
body bow down,  
they now humbly  
on knees bend  
to his dead bones.  
Now we may understand  
that men's wisdom  
and their devices  
and their counsels  
are like nought  
'gainst God's resolves.

During the wars with the Danes, Corfe Castle was fortified, and was regarded as a defence for Wareham. When after the payment of much danegeld and the settlement of many Danes peacefully in England, Ethelred, as was said above, decided upon the massacre of the foreigners on St. Brice's Day, Corfe was the scene of horrible carnage. A troop of soldiers having sealed orders arrived. The mistress of the castle refused to give up such of her servants and soldiers as were Danes. But in the morning, when the sea-loving people went down to bathe, the King's men followed, and killed them while they were unarmed and powerless.

The late Thomas Bond, Esq., the greatest authority upon Purbeck, is convinced that William I built the great tower of the castle. In his building he evidently made use of the former edifice, for the masonry of the south-west wall is Saxon in style. The keep is of Purbeck ashlar, which would be more easily obtained here than wood. This keep or great tower is built very much on the same plan as the part of the Tower of London which was certainly built by the Conqueror.

There is a very extraordinary contradiction in the early history of Corfe. *Domesday Book* says that within the manor of Kingston William built the castle of *Wareham* on a hide of land for which he exchanged the church of Gillingham with the Abbey of Shaftesbury. The *Testa de Nevill* gives much the same statement, but the castle is called *Corfe*. As both agree that the hide of land was in Kingston, and as no part of Wareham is included in that manor, the most probable explanation is that the compilers of *Domesday Book* made a clerical error. From the time of the Conquest to the sixteenth century Corfe was attached to the Crown,

and was governed for the King by various barons during limited periods.

As was said in an earlier chapter, William gave his carpenter Durand the manor of Moulham for the service of repairing the great tower of the castle. Probably also it was a reward for good work done there. In Stephen's reign Earl Baldwin de Redvers seized the castle for Maud, and though Stephen attacked it he was unable to retake it.

According to one authority, the wife, Maud de Waleric, and son of William de Braose, a powerful baron who had incurred King John's displeasure and had fled to France, were captured, imprisoned in Corfe, and starved to death.

King John spent vast sums on the improvement and adornment of this castle. As the names recorded of the workmen are chiefly French, the King evidently tried to obtain the best building talent available. He stayed at Corfe a good deal, and kept his treasure and the regalia there; the castle was also used by him as a state prison, and it was he who had the fosse excavated.

After the siege of Mirabeau in 1202, King John took Princess Eleanor, Prince Arthur and about two hundred of his knights prisoners. Twenty-two of the knights were imprisoned in Corfe and starved to death. Arthur was murdered at Rouen, and his sister, "the Damsel of Brittany," was lodged in Corfe for a few years; in the next reign she was removed to Bristol, where she died after forty years' captivity. While in Corfe she had two companions, for William of Scotland's two daughters, sent to John as hostages, were also imprisoned in Corfe.

King John's interest does not seem to have been confined



to the castle of Corfe, but extended to the town also, for in the last year of his reign he granted to "the men of Corfe" licence to hold a market on Saturdays.

Amongst the part of the regalia that was left at Corfe during John's disastrous journey northward was the Saxon crown, a plain circle or chaplet of gold, with which Henry III was crowned at Gloucester, the Norman crown having been lost by John in crossing the Wash. Peter de Mauley, who was Constable of the castle under John, gave up the keys to the Earl of Pembroke at the beginning of the new reign, and the Protector took possession. The escutcheon still to be seen over one tower was for ages thought to be his. As well as the gold crown, many jewels, and much treasure, Pembroke found engines of war secreted in the castle, John having intended to use them against the barons.

Nine years after Pembroke's death Peter de Mauley retook Corfe, and the barons demanded it as a pledge of Henry's good behaviour.

In the thirty-second year of Henry III a market and a fair were granted to the town of Corfe. A great deal more building must have been done in this reign, as early in the next the castle is described as having four towers, called respectively La Gloriette, Cocaigne, Plenty, and Butavant. The first three were probably situated at the south-east angle of the castle overlooking the fosse on the south and the deep valley on the east. "Butavant," which contained a dungeon, was situated at the north-west angle of the castle hill. "It was," says Mr. Thomas Bond, "the *but-avant*, the foremost point of abutment in this direction, or it may have been thus named after the castle of Butavant, in France."



In the fortieth year of his reign Henry III made Elias de Rabayne Constable of the castle and gave the warren of Purbeck with the chase to Stephen de Ashlen, and ten years later gave both to Bernard de Brocas for life.

Edward II was imprisoned at Corfe before he was taken to Berkeley Castle and murdered by Sir John Mautravers of Langton and two other knights. This, at least, is the opinion of Hume, Rapin, and other modern historians, but Mr. Banks quotes a history printed in the first volume of the *Harleian Miscellany*, in which it is stated that Edward of Carnarvon was murdered at Corfe, and further, that he had a peculiar dread of that castle, derived from ancient predictions founded on traditions relating to the fate of his martyred namesake.

It was by being mendaciously told that his royal brother was alive and imprisoned in Corfe that Edmund Plantagenet, Earl of Kent, committed the indiscretion that led to his execution. The Queen and Mortimer, wishing his downfall, led him to believe that Edward was alive and at Corfe. Believing this, Kent wrote a letter expressing his loyalty to his brother and his determination to effect his release. The letter, of course, fell into Mortimer's hands, and the Earl was accused of high treason and executed in 1329.

In Richard the Second's reign Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent, and Alicia, his wife, were given the command of Corfe Castle. At their death it was given to John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset, in whose family it remained till Henry Beaufort, the Lancastrian Duke, was on the accession of Edward IV attainted. The next owner was George, Duke of Clarence, celebrated for his death in a barrel of malmsey wine, who

was succeeded by his brother, Richard of Gloucester, later Richard III.

On Henry the Seventh's accession he gave Corfe to his mother, the Duchess of Richmond, who was daughter of the Duke of Beaufort, and had been born and spent her youth in the neighbourhood. On her death in the first year of Henry VIII it returned to the Crown. Henry VIII granted it to his illegitimate son, the Duke of Richmond and Somerset, who died without children.

Edward VI granted it to Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset. After his attainder and death Corfe reverted to the Crown, and did not descend to his son as other parts of Purbeck did. In the fourteenth year of her reign Queen Elizabeth gave Corfe Castle, with all the liberties, privileges, and royalties, and the lordship of the manor, and "all the lands and hereditaments . . . together with the advowsons of the church of Corfe and the chapel of Kingston annexed, the whole Isle of Purbeck, viz. the government of it, forest, chase, and free warren, and all the Queen's hereditaments there, all the lead, iron, and glass, within and without the castle, a messuage or ancient rent of £1. 4s. in Purbeck, the rent of four loads of hay called hay silver, an ancient rent of 8s. 2d. for quitte silver, a rent of 1s. 8d. and four quarters of salt, and twenty bushels of corn," to Christopher Hatton, Esq., whom she knighted later, in consideration of £4761. 18s. 7½d. Sir Christopher Hatton died unmarried, so was succeeded by his nephew William Newport, his sister's son, who took the additional name of Hatton and was knighted.

He married Lady Elizabeth Cecil, daughter of the Earl of Exeter, son of the famous Lord Burghley. Sir William

died without children, and left his possessions to his widow. This lady attracted Francis Bacon, who wished to marry her, but, for some unknown reason, she chose Sir Edward Coke, the Attorney-General, a man old enough to be her father.

The marriage ceremony was unusual, as the beautiful Lady Elizabeth refused to go to church with so elderly a bridegroom. She would consent to neither banns nor licence. The illegality of the marriage of the Attorney-General brought a citation from the Ecclesiastical Courts, and Sir Edward only escaped legal proceedings by pleading ignorance of ecclesiastical law. Lady Elizabeth refused to take her new husband's name, and was something of a virago where he was concerned.

They had one daughter, Frances, who was afterwards Viscountess Purbeck, her husband Sir John Villiers being given the viscounty of Purbeck on account of her prospective possession. Family fury reached its zenith when Sir Edward informed his wife and daughter that he had arranged this marriage. Lady Elizabeth eloped with Lady Frances to Oatlands, a relation's house. Sir Edward followed, and Oatlands stood a siege of some hours. Lady Frances was captured by her father, and eventually married to Sir John with great splendour, Lady Elizabeth being at the time in prison for abducting her own daughter.

Lady Purbeck was a brilliant figure at court, and both she and her mother played in Ben Jonson's masque *The Metamorphosed Gipsy* before King James I. There are a number of letters in Mr. Bankes's book which relate to the career of the one lady who took her name from the Isle of Purbeck.

As Lord and Lady Purbeck died without children the title became extinct.

In 1645 Lady Elizabeth Hatton sold Corfe Castle and all its appurtenances to Sir John Bankes, Lord Chief Justice of England. The ancestors of Sir John Bankes possessed property in and about Keswick, in Cumberland, but the first member of the family to become famous was Sir John himself.

Born at Keswick in 1589, he was educated at the local grammar school and at Queen's College, Oxford. He left the University without a degree, and established himself at Gray's Inn, where he studied law. In due course he was called to the Bar, and gained the reputation of being an able advocate and sound lawyer. He entered Parliament as member for Morpeth in 1628, and was made Attorney-General and knighted eight years later. He appeared for the Crown in the trial of John Hampden, and in 1640 was made Chief Justice of Common Pleas; in 1642 he became a Privy Councillor, and received the degree of D.C.L. from the University of Oxford in the same year. He sided with the King in the Civil War, and Charles I had so high an opinion of the Lord Chief Justice that at one time he thought of making him Lord Keeper. Sir John's policy was so wise that even the Parliament in their proposals to the King in January, 1643, desired that he might continue in his office.

In the summer of 1643, however, he offended the Parliament by declaring from the Bench at Salisbury that the actions of Essex, Manchester, and Waller were treasonable; he was therefore impeached and his property confiscated. He remained with the King and continued to discharge his duties

as Privy Councillor till his death on the 28th December, 1644. He was buried in the chapel of Christ Church, Oxford, where his monument against one of the columns is still to be found.

Meanwhile his wife, Mary, daughter of Robert Hawtrey, Esq., of Riselip, was holding Corfe Castle for the King.

"After the unhappy differences between the King and the two Houses, or rather between the King and a faction in both Houses, grew high," says the *Mercurius Rusticus* in the best account of the siege that has been written, "it being generally feared that the sword would decide the controversy, the Lady Bankes, a virtuous and prudent lady, resolved, with her children and family, to retire to this castle, and shelter themselves from the storm which she saw coming, which she accordingly did." All went well till May, 1642, when Sir Walter Erle, the commander of the Parliamentary forces in Dorset, determined to take Corfe Castle. By ancient custom, as here related, the "Mayor and barons of Corfe, accompanied by the gentry of the Island, have permission from the lord of the castle on May Day to course a stag, which every year is performed with much solemnity and great concourse of people." Sir Walter Erle knew of this custom, and thought it would be an excellent plan to mingle his soldiers with the huntsmen, and when the latter were absorbed in the chase, call off his men and seize the unguarded castle. Lady Bankes, however, outwitted him, for as soon as she heard of the approach of soldiers she gave orders for the castle gates to be shut and guarded. The soldiers, angry at the frustration of their leader's plans, "used threatening language, casting out words implying some intention to take the castle."



The officers, however, denied such intentions. But Lady Banks was warned, and took a guard and a large supply of provisions into the castle. The action drew upon her the suspicion of the Parliament, and letters were sent from Poole to demand the four small cannon with which the castle was armed. Lady Banks entreated that she might keep these for her own defence, promising to dismount them. This petition was granted, but a few days later forty seamen came at dawn and demanded the cannon. Lady Banks interviewed them at the gate, and insisted on seeing their warrant, which was, somewhat to her surprise, quite in order. Instead of giving up her guns, the brave lady ordered her small force of five men and the maid-servants to mount the cannon on their carriages and load them. The first one fired so terrified the seamen that they made a hurried flight.

After this the castle was closely invested ; neither provisions nor ammunition could be procured, and Lady Banks was obliged to treat with her enemies, with the result that the four cannon were handed over to the commanders from Poole on condition that food should be allowed to pass into the castle. The rebels being in possession of the guns, looked upon this castle as theirs and abated their vigilance. Lady Banks was therefore enabled to smuggle in "a hundred and a half of powder and a quantity of match proportionate." She also sent to Prince Maurice and Lord Hertford at Blandford for help. Captain Lawrence, son of Sir Edward Lawrence of Grange, and Captain Bond were sent with a small company of soldiers. Soon afterwards a body of Parliamentary troops arrived, burnt four houses in the town, summoned the castle, and being "denied," left it.

"But," to give the stirring words of the contemporary account,<sup>1</sup> "on the three-and-twentieth of June the sagacious knight Sir Walter Erle (that hath the gift of discerning treasons, and might have made up his nine-and-thirty treasons forty, by reckoning in his own), accompanied by Captain Sidenham, Captain Henry Jervis, Captain Skuts, son of the arch-traitor, Skuts of Poole, with a body between five and six hundred, came and possessed themselves of the town, taking the opportunity of a misty morning, that they might find no resistance from the castle.

"They brought with them to the siege a demi-cannon, a culverin, and two sacres; with these and their small shot they played on the castle on all quarters of it with good observation of advantages, making their battery strongest where they thought the castle weakest. And to bind the soldiers by tie of conscience to an eager prosecution of the siege, they administer them an oath and mutually bind themselves to most unchristian resolutions, that, if they found the defendants obstinate not to yield, they would maintain the siege to victory, and then deny quarter unto all, killing without mercy men, women, and children.

"And to bring on their own soldiers they abused them with falsehoods, telling them that the castle stood on a level, yet with good advantages of approach; that there were but forty men in the castle, whereof twenty were for them; that there was rich booty and the like: so, during the siege they used all base unworthy means to corrupt the defendants to betray the castle into their hands; the better sort they endeavour to corrupt with bribes, to the rest they offer double pay and the whole plunder of the castle. When all the arts took no effect, then they fell to stratagems and engines; one they called the 'sow,' and the other the 'boar,' being made with boards lined with wool to dead the shot. The first that moved forward was the sow, but not being musket-proof, she cast nine of eleven of her farrow; for the musketers from

<sup>1</sup> The *Mercurius Rusticus*.

this castle were so good marksmen at their legs, the only part of all their bodies left without defences, that nine ran away as well as their broken and battered legs would give them leave, and of the two which knew neither how to run away nor well to stay for fear, one was slain.

"The boar, of the two (a man would think) the valianter creature, seeing the ill success of the sow to cast her litter before her time, durst not advance.

"The most advantageous part of their batteries was the church, which they without fear of profanation used, not only as their rampart, but their rendezvous: of the surplice they made two shirts for two soldiers; they broke down the organ and made the pipes serve for cases to hold their powder and shot; and not being furnished with musket bullets, they cut off the lead of the church and rolled up and shoot it without ever casting it in a mould.

"Sir Walter and the commanders were earnest to press forward the soldiers, but, as prodigal as they were of the blood of the common soldiers, they were sparing of their own. It was a general observation that valiant Sir Walter never willingly exposed himself to any hazard, for, being by chance endangered with a bullet shot through his coat, afterwards he put on a bear's skin; and to the eternal honour of this knight's valour be it recorded, for fear of musket-shot (for others they had none) he was seen to creep on all four on the sides of the hill to keep himself from danger.

"This base cowardice of the assailants added courage and resolution to the defendants; therefore, not compelled by want, but rather to brave the rebels, they sallied out and brought in eight cows and a bull into the castle without the loss of a man or a man wounded.

"At another time five boys fetched in four cows. They that stood on the hill called to one in a house in the valley, crying 'Shoot, Anthony'; but Anthony thought it good to sleep in a whole skin and durst not look out, so that afterwards it grew into a proverbial jeer from the defendants to

the assailants—‘Shoot, Anthony.’ The rebels having spent much time and ammunition, and some men, and yet being as far from hopes of taking the castle as the first day they came thither, at last the Earl of Warwick sends them a supply of an hundred and fifty mariners, with several cartloads of petards, grannadoes, and other warlike provisions, with scaling-ladders to assault the castle by scaladoe. They made large offers to him who shall first scale the wall—twenty pounds to the first, and so by descending sums a reward to the twentieth; but all this could not avail with these silly wretches, who were brought thither, as themselves confessed, like sheep to the slaughter, some of them having exchanged the manner of their death, the halter for the bullet, having taken them out of gaols: one of them being taken prisoner had letters testimonial in his hands whence he came; the letters I mean when he was burnt for a felon being very visible to the beholders: but when they found that persuasion could not prevail with such abject low-spirited men, the commanders resolve on another course, which was to make them drunk, knowing that drunkenness makes some men fight like lions, that being sober would run away like hares. To this purpose they fill them with strong waters, even to madness, and ready they are now for any designs; and for fear Sir Walter should be valiant against his will, like Cæsar, he was the only man almost that came sober to the assault; an imitation of the Turkish practice (for certainly there can be nothing of Christianity in it, to send poor souls to God’s judgment-seat in the very act of two grievous sins, rebellion and drunkenness), who to stupify their soldiers and make them insensible of their dangers give them opium. Being now armed with drink, they resolve to storm the castle on all sides and apply their scaling-ladders, it being ordered by the leaders (if I may without solecism call them so that stood behind, and did not so much as follow) that when twenty were entered they should give a watchword to the rest, and that was Old Watt, a word ill-chosen by Sir Watt Erle, and considering the business in



hand, little better than ominous, for if I be not deceived the hunters that beat bushes for the fearful timorous hare call him Old Watt.

"Being now pot-valiant and possessed with a borrowed courage which was to evaporate in sleep, they divide their forces into two parties, whereof one assaults the middle ward, defended by valiant Captain Lawrence and the greater part of the soldiers; the other assault the upper ward, which the Lady Bankes (to her eternal honour be it spoken), with her daughters, women, and five soldiers, undertook to make good against the rebels, and did bravely perform what she undertook; for by heaving over stones and hot embers they repelled the rebels, and kept them from climbing the ladders, thence to throw in that wildfire which every rebel had already in his hand. Being repelled, and having in this siege and this assault lost and hurt an hundred men, Old Sir Watt, hearing that the king's forces were advanced, cried, and ran away crying, leaving Sidenham to command in chief, to bring off the ordnance, ammunition, and the remainder of the army, who were afraid to appear abroad, kept sanctuary in the church till night, meaning to sup and run away by starlight, but supper being ready and set upon the table, an alarm was given that the King's forces were coming. The news took away Sidenham's stomach; all this provision was but messes of meat set before the sepulchres of the dead; he leaves his artillery, ammunition, and (which with these men is something) a good supper, and ran away to take boat for Poole, leaving likewise at the shore about a hundred horse to the next takers, which next day proved good prize to the soldiers of the castle. Thus, after six weeks' strict siege of this castle, the desire of the rebels, the fears of Old Sir Watt, and the key of those parts, by the loyalty and brave resolution of this honourable lady, the valour of Captain Lawrence and some eighty soldiers (by the loss only of two men), was delivered from the bloody intentions of those merciless rebels on the 4th of August, 1643."



For more than two years after this brave defence of her castle Lady Banks seems to have been left in peace, but her troubles recommenced in December, 1645, when Fairfax sent one regiment of horse and two of foot to take Corfe, now the only garrison left for the King between London and Exeter. These troops under Colonel Bingham besieged the castle. Again Lady Banks marshalled her forces and prepared to defend her home, and might have succeeded but for treachery within the fortress. Colonel Pitman, one of the officers of the garrison, intimated to the besiegers that he would deliver the castle into their hands if they would promise him protection. When his offer was accepted he suggested to Colonel Anketil, the Governor of the castle, that he, Pitman, should be sent to fetch a hundred men from Somersetshire to reinforce the garrison, explaining that he could get permission from Colonel Bingham to pass through the enemy's ranks on the pretence of procuring exchange for his brother, then a prisoner. Colonel Anketil consented—one wonders if Lady Banks knew of the plan—and on February 26th Pitman started on his journey, and at midnight he returned with a hundred men—*not* Royalists from Somerset, but Roundheads from Weymouth! Pitman led them in and gave them the command of the Keep and the Queen's Tower, and when the day dawned the besiegers, seeing their friends on the tower and platform, advanced, but the garrison, realising they were betrayed, demanded a parley, the result of which was that Lady Banks was forced to surrender, though with the honours of war, and that the lives of the garrison were spared.

On March 4th a vote was passed in the House of Commons to slight Corfe, and orders were at once given for its demoli-

tion; some parts were pulled down, the towers were undermined, and gunpowder completed the work of destruction. So ended the fortress; after having resisted the power of the foe for more than seven hundred years, it fell through treachery and was destroyed by judicial slighting.

After her capitulation Lady Bankes found herself homeless and almost penniless. Her husband's property had been confiscated, and there was no hope of regaining it. The appeal she made for the jointure settled upon her before Sir John's delinquency was refused. But when Cromwell, who had a chivalrous feeling for women and probably also admired the strength of Lady Bankes's character, came into power he granted her the annual amount of her jointure. She lived till April 11th, 1661, and so had the happiness of seeing the restoration of Charles II, whose father she had served so faithfully and at so great a cost.

Ralph Bankes, eldest son of Sir John and Lady Bankes, entered Richard Cromwell's Parliament as member for Corfe in 1659, and two years later was elected by the same constituency to the first Parliament of Charles II. In the same year he received the honour of knighthood. Having recovered his patrimony, Sir Ralph wished to provide himself with a habitation on his Dorset estates; Corfe was beyond repair, so he chose Kingston Lacy, near Wimborne, where the Dukes of Somerset had formerly lived. From designs made by Inigo Jones, a beautiful house was erected on the site of the ancient manor.

Sir Ralph and his successors have had a predilection for collecting art treasures, and the picture gallery at Kingston Lacy is one of the finest private collections in existence.

There are paintings by Velasquez, Murillo, Raphael, Titian, Tintoretto, Rubens, Lely, Reynolds, Romney, and many other great artists, the most interesting pictures being "The Judgment of Solomon," an unfinished sketch by Giorgione, and portraits of Charles I and Henrietta Maria by Vandyck.

In the library are the keys of Corfe Castle, which in spite of the surrender Lady Banks was able to keep; also the seal of the castle, and one or two cannon-balls found after the siege. On the staircase there are statues of Sir John and Lady Banks, the latter holding the keys of Corfe in her hand. There is an obelisk in the grounds which was brought by the late W. J. Banks, Esq., from Philæ in 1819.

A Roman road has recently been discovered in the grounds.

Kingston Lacy House has now lost its seventeenth-century appearance, as it was renovated by Sir Charles Barry, the architect of the Houses of Parliament, in the middle of the last century.

The present owner of Corfe Castle, Hereditary Lord High Admiral of the Purbeck Seas, Lay Bishop of Wimborne, and Lord of the Hundreds of Rowbarrow and Hasler, is a small boy of five years old, Henry John Ralph Banks,<sup>1</sup> the lineal descendant of the Chief Justice.

The Constable of Corfe had numerous privileges, which he frequently exercised in a very arbitrary manner; the records are full of cases in which some neighbouring landowner sued the Constable for property appropriated and trees cut down. On one occasion, in 1277, so important a person as the Abbess of Shaftesbury charged Elias De Rabayne, the most rapacious

<sup>1</sup> Born 1902.

constable of all, for cutting down and carrying away five hundred ashes and two hundred maples and thorns from her wood at Kingston. Elias pleaded that it was the custom of the castle to take fuel from the woods; the jury pointed out that it was *not* the custom to do so to so great an extent, and for once Elias lost his case.

The townspeople had some privileges to balance those of the constable. The town of Corfe belonged to the castle, and the citizens, called barons, until quite lately had the right to choose their mayor, coroner, and bailiffs, and indeed all the privileges of the barons of the Cinque Ports.

Though, as has been said, Corfe was one of the most ancient boroughs by prescription in the country, enjoying many privileges and immunities on account of its connection with the castle, it did not possess a charter of corporation till the eighteenth year of Queen Elizabeth's reign. This charter conferred many benefits on Sir Christopher Hatton, and general rights, including the rank of barons of the Cinque Ports, on the townsmen. Charles II ratified this charter, and added a rider that he wished it to be in no way prejudicial to the heirs and assigns of Ralph Bankes of Kingston Lacy.

Some of the customs of the castle approved by the Court Rolls to be found in a book at Kingston Lacy are too remarkable to be omitted.

"Item. That no ilander ought to marye his daughter oute of the island without the licence of the lord constable or some other officer."

"Item. That no inhabitant of the iland shall make any stone wall, hedge, or dyche above the assysse,<sup>1</sup> that is no

<sup>1</sup> "Above the assysse" means above the height allowed by the Court regulations.

higher than that a hinde with her calf may easily leape our it at all places."

"Item. That no man ought to erect or buyld upp any new house on the heath or elsewhere without licence of the lord constable of the court."

"Item. That no man ought to take any ffishe on the Saboth Daye."

The interest of the castle seems to dim that of the manor, though the manor-house of Corfe is one of the largest and least mutilated on the island. Its ground plan is in the form of an E, and it was built by one of the Dackhams in the sixteenth century. The Dackhams acquired large estates in Purbeck in Henry the Eighth's reign, when the head of the family married the heiress of Richard Clavyle of Corfe Castle. The manor eventually descended to the Rev. John Colson of Frampton, who sold it in 1751 to John Bond of Grange, whose descendant still owns it.

The church, dedicated to St. Edward the Martyr, is, with the exception of the tower, which dates from the fourteenth century, a modern building, having been rebuilt in 1860.

For three years after the occupation by Sir Walter Erle's troops the church was unfit for public worship, and in 1646 Parliament granted £50 for its restoration; it appears to have held together for two hundred years, at the end of which time it was found necessary to rebuild it: the new church has been designed to resemble as nearly as possible a building of the Perpendicular period.

The Town Hall is small even in proportion to the town, and is only remarkable for being the meeting-place of the Company of Marblers once a year. As has been said, that company's papers were kept there till about 1830. The cross



which once stood in the market-place has vanished, leaving a pedestal of "burr" stone of quite hypocritically modern appearance behind. The town used to boast a museum, with excellent specimens of local fossils and antiquities exhumed from neighbouring barrows, which a few years ago were removed to Dorchester, where they are carefully arranged, and they and the County Museum are well worth going to Dorchester to see.

There are numerous farm-houses round Corfe, but the only ones that arrogate to themselves the rank of manors and have histories in which any interest can be felt are Woolgarston, Rollington, Rempston, and Ower.

Woolgarston lies in the valley sheltered from cold north winds by Brenscombe Hill. In the time of Edward the Confessor it was held by five thegns. After the Conquest, William de Braose was its lord. In Henry the Third's reign, William le Fraunceis quit-claimed it to Walter le Ferner. From then till 1838, when it was bought by the Earl of Eldon, it appears to have been divided into various parcels held by different people—Clavells, Talbots, Chaunterels, Rempstons, Uvedales, and several others, including the Prior of Christchurch.

Rollington lies north of the hills, and is exposed to the winds from north and east. It is not mentioned in *Domesday Book*, but in Edward the First's reign it was settled by John de la Tylle of Blandford on Isabel, his wife, as her jointure. From the de la Tylles it passed to the Gildenes, a member of which family sold it in 1446 to Edmund, Duke of Somerset, Thomas Maunsell, and Roger Ivey. It eventually descended to the Uvedales and the Okedens. In 1757 it was



THE GREYHOUND INN, CORFE CASTLE



purchased from William Okeden by John Calcraft, Esq., whose descendant, Captain Marsden, now owns it.

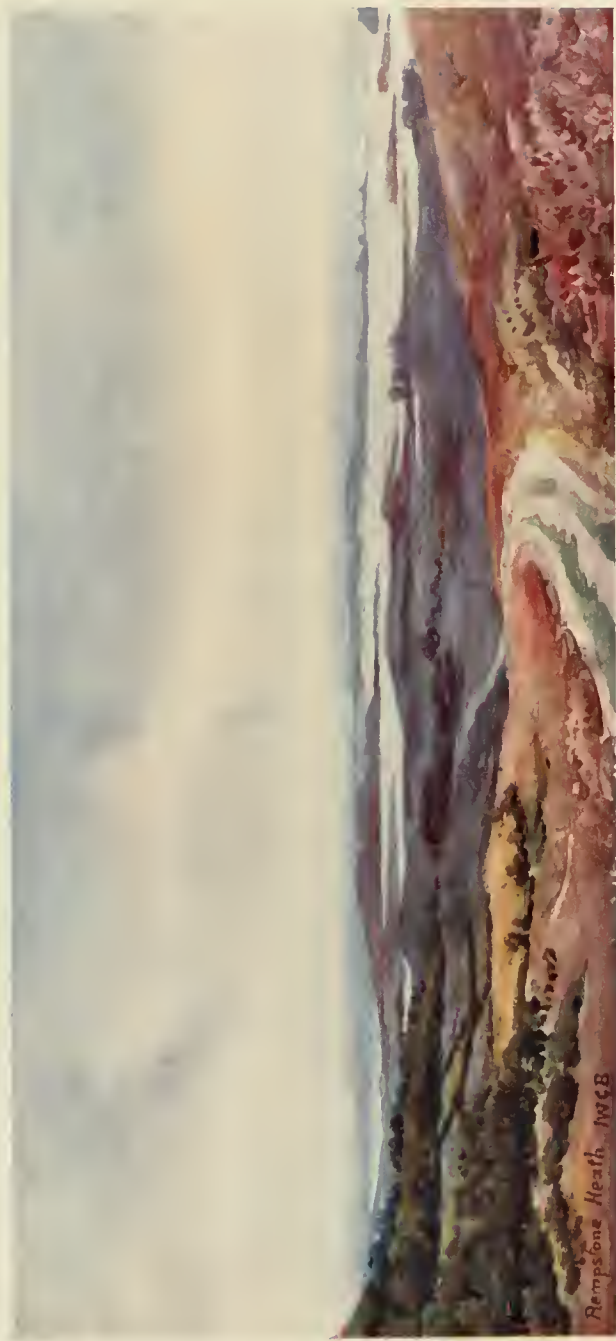
Rempston lies in the midst of a beautiful park on the north side of the Purbeck Hills—almost opposite to Woolgarston, but with Brenscombe Hill between. It is a charming old house with two wings, one looking considerably older than the other. Once the demesne was a hamlet, now it is only a farm, though its appearance is far more imposing than that of many manors. It used to belong to the Rempstons, descendants, through a daughter, of the house of the Talbots of Godlingston, “a family of some note in the island, who first occur in the reign of Henry IV, and took their name from it and were lords of it.”<sup>1</sup> This is the only intimation that the Rempstons were lords of Rempston, though from philological reasons it seems probable enough. But in the fifteenth century they were seated at Godlingston, and as the inquisition taken after the death of Robert Rempston of Godlingston in 1456 makes no mention of Rempston amongst his possessions, it evidently had passed from the family before that date. Again passing through heiresses, Rempston descended to the Uvedales, who held it in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; from them it passed to the Trenchards, who sold it to the Framptons, during whose ownership the house was burnt. In Queen Anne’s reign it came to the Rose family, a scion of which sold it in 1757 to John Calcraft, Esq., to whose descendant, Captain Marsden, it now belongs.

Ower, once a manor, now a hamlet, was given by King Athelstan by a foundation charter to the Abbey of Milton. In *Domesday Book* it is called Ora; it had no plough, so

<sup>1</sup> Hutchins.

could not have been in a state of cultivation. Its claim to importance was centred in the fact that it had thirteen salt-makers (*salinarii*), paying 20s. rent! After changing hands many times, Ower was purchased by John Calcraft, Esq., in 1761. It now belongs to his descendant, Captain Marsden. The hamlet is situated on an arm of Poole Harbour, four miles from Corfe, and was formerly the chief port of Purbeck. The stone and marble was exported from its quay, and the timber sent from the New Forest for the building of Corfe Castle was landed here. Its one festival now is on Shrove Tuesday, when the quarriers kick the football here in accordance with ancient custom.





POOLE HARBOUR FROM REMINSTONE HEATH



## CHAPTER X

### STUDLAND

“a sunless church  
Where mildewed walls, uneven paving stones,  
And wasted carvings passed antique research.”—HARDY.

THE road from Corfe to Studland crosses King Edward's Bridge, turns sharply to the right, and continues in an eastward direction with the Purbeck Hills on the south, and heath-land and Poole Harbour on the north until Rempston is reached. After passing through the park a steep ascent leads to the height near the large barrow called the Giant's Grave, from which Hardy's Ethelberta, on her journey to Corfe Castle, observed the surrounding country while her donkey rested after carrying her up the hill. Here, in the words of her inimitable creator, is a description of the view:—

“The lofty ridge ran inland, the country on each side lay beneath her like a map, domains behind domains, parishes by the score, harbours, fir-woods, and little inland seas mixing curiously together. . . . Far below on the right hand . . . the silver sunbeams lighted up a many-armed inland sea which stretched round an island with fir-trees and gorse, and amid brilliant crimson heaths wherein white paths and roads occasionally met the eye in dashes and zigzags like flashes of lightning. Outside, where the broad Channel appeared, a berylline and opalised variegation of ripples,

currents, deeps, and shallows, lay as fair under the sun as a New Jerusalem, the shores being of gleaming sand. . . . On the left a valley of heavy greens and browns, which at its further side rose to meet the sea in tall cliffs, suggesting even here at their back how terrible were their aspects seaward in a growling south-west gale. Here grassed hills rose like knuckles gloved in dark olive, and little plantations between them formed a still deeper and sadder monochrome."

A little farther on, the road from Swanage, which passes through Ulwell Gap at the foot of Nine Barrow Down and then climbs up to the golf links, joins the Studland Road, which, rough and stony, winds downwards, with Ballard Down on the right and Godlingston Heath on the left, to the quaint little village of Studland.

A few thatched cottages grouped round an ancient church, and one or two white houses looking like daisies on an ancient lawn, form the village of Studland. The village lies in a hollow of the hills, and a high cliff shelters it even from the sea. Studland Bay lies between the Foreland, or Handfast Point, where Old Harry still stands, and Redend Point. The left wing, so to speak, of the bay is bounded by the tract of sand that extends to South Haven Point, the southern coast of the strait that forms the entrance to Poole Harbour.

A wooded miniature chine—in winter a watercourse—is the highway from the bay to the village, and almost opposite it the church of St. Nicholas does its best to hide itself in a grove of elm trees. In this nearly perfect example of Norman architecture the necessary restoration has been carried out with such care and skill that it leaves no visible traces. The church consists of nave, chancel, a central tower, and a south porch. The whole building is of rubble stone

and ashlar found in the neighbourhood, which, as according to Ducarel parts of it date from Saxon times, speaks well for the local stone and workmanship. The chancel consists of one bay of groining, the ribs spring from piers with square abaci, circular shafts, and carved capitals. The chancel, chancel arch, north and south windows, the inner south and the north doorways, the corbel table in the nave, parts of the walls, tower, and buttresses, all date from about 1180, indeed, the only later parts are the east window, which is of the Decorated period, and the west window and roof, which are comparatively modern. The original font remains, and traces of frescoes can be descried on the chancel arch. The most eastern window in the south wall is of great interest to all people of Purbeck, for beneath it is inscribed :—

“Affectionately dedicated by his brothers and sisters to the Memory of William George Hawtrey Bankes. He died at Lucknow from the effects of severe wounds received in action April 6th MDCCCLVIII.”

Above are the arms of his family and pendant from them a Victoria Cross.

A tablet over the Bankes family pew is in memory of Sister Ina (Miss Digby, whose mother was a Miss Bankes), who died in Bombay when working as a Sister of Charity.

Over the reading-desk there is a memorial tablet to Francis Fane, Esq., M.P., a member of the Oxfordshire branch of the Westmoreland family, who “after having served his country in Parliament independently for thirty years” died at Studland in 1813.

Beneath this tablet is one to “Mrs. Ann Fane widow of the above.”



There is also a monument to Dr. Smythies, Bishop of Central Africa; a copy of his *Life* may be found chained to the seat in the chancel on which he sat when he lived in Studland as a schoolboy.

The tombstone in the churchyard to Sergeant Lawrence and his French wife was erected by members of the Bankes family, whose servant he was, in accordance with a promise, with an account of his deeds, which I will quote, on one side of the stone, and his wife's name with the date of her death on the other:—

To the Honoured Memory  
Of Sergeant WILLIAM LAWRENCE  
(of the 40th Regiment Foot),  
who after a long and eventful life  
in the service of his country  
peacefully ended his days at Studland  
November 11th 1869  
He served with his distinguished Regiment  
in the war in South America 1805,  
and through the whole of the Peninsular war 1808–1813.  
He received a silver medal and no less than ten clasps  
for the battles in which he was engaged  
Roleia [*sic*], Vimiera, Talavera,  
Ciudad Rodrigo,  
Badajoz,  
(in which desperate assault, being one of the volunteers  
for the forlorn hope, he was most severely wounded)  
Vittoria, Pyrenees, Nivelles,  
Orthes, Toulouse.  
He also fought at the glorious victory of  
Waterloo  
June 18th 1815.

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While still serving with his Regiment during the  
occupation of Paris by the Allied Armies  
Sergeant Lawrence married Clotilde Clairet  
at St. Germain-en-Laye, who died Sept. 20, 1853,  
and was buried beneath this spot.



STUDLAND



One feels that Clotilde of St. Germain-en-Laye must have suffered, living in this secluded village. Apart from the ennui she would naturally experience, she had a poignant trouble to bear. After three years in garrison at St. Germain-en-Laye she and her husband were in 1818 suddenly ordered home to England, so the only arrangement poor Clotilde could make for her tiny daughter was to entrust her to the care of her brother, who agreed, in consideration of a small weekly sum, to bring up the child; but no sooner had Sergeant Lawrence and Clotilde left France than the dishonest brother took the poor little girl and left her at the Enfants Trouvés, while he still continued taking the money which was sent for the child's support. When she reached the age of thirteen her parents thought of having her over in England, but on inquiry no trace could be found of the girl.

In the centre of the triangular plot in front of Studland Church door is a flat tombstone, covering the grave of the village wizard of some ninety years ago. On one occasion he prophesied that Mr. Fane, already mentioned, would never leave the village alive. At the conclusion of his usual summer visit, and on the eve of his departure, Mr. Fane paid the wizard a farewell visit and laughingly said, "I'm off to-morrow, and I never felt better in my life, so I do not think much of your power of prophecy." "You are not gone yet, sir," replied the wizard, and the very next day Mr. Fane died suddenly and was buried at Studland.

It was at one time firmly believed by the natives that a demon walked nightly over the hills from Studland to Swanage, but whether the following story was the cause or the effect of the legend is not known.

Seventy or eighty years ago there was no resident clergyman in Studland, and as the old sexton graphically described it, "we Studland folk had to 'catch a service' when we could, and when it was convenient for the rector of Swanage to get over to Studland—sometimes at nine on Sunday morning, or at five in the afternoon," so Mr. Fane was able to rent the Studland rectory during the summer months. The member for Dorchester was never so happy as when playing practical jokes, and on one occasion, having received a visit from the Nonconformist minister from Swanage, he could not resist telling him a wonderful story of a demon that rode backwards and forwards along the Studland and Swanage road, whose object it was to gallop after and clutch hold of any horseman unable to outride his pursuer. Having plied the worthy minister with several bottles of his best and strongest wine, Mr. Fane would not hear of his returning to Swanage on foot, but insisted on his visitor riding the mare already saddled and bridled at the front door. Allowing the mare some few minutes' start, Mr. Fane let loose her foal, which at once galloped off as fast as it could in pursuit of its mother. The poor minister hearing the sound of hoofs behind him and remembering Mr. Fane's demon story, stuck his heels into the old mare's flanks, and on arriving at his own door fell in a fainting condition into his poor wife's arms. From that night he firmly believed that an emissary from the dread inferno patrolled the hills at night.

Another interesting remnant of the past in Studland is the base of an old village cross that looks like a large grindstone, and lies at the root of a gigantic elm; the roots of the elm have grown since the stone was put there, and



consequently lifted it into a sloping position. It is characteristic of the temperament of the Studlander that no one has moved it during three hundred years.

There are fairy rings on Studland Heath—at least, they have all the characteristics of the fairy rings described in the books one read ever so long ago; scientific people, however, sweeping away the opinions of “youth’s brief years,” call the rings “hut circles,” and say they were fire-places of some tribe of Early Britons who spent the summer months in fishing in Poole Harbour.

One of the most interesting features in the environs of Studland is the Agglestone (A.S. Hælig-stan or Holy Stone, possibly Egglestan, or sharp upsticking stone), which is situated about a mile from the village on a hillock on Studland Heath. It is a piece of dark red ferruginous sandstone about sixteen feet high, the circumference at the base being sixty and at the top ninety feet. According to local legend the Devil, resting on the downs above the Needles, observed the erection of Salisbury spire and roused to fury threw his nightcap at the offending fane. In its passage through the air the nightcap turned into stone and, falling short, landed on Studland Heath, where it remains to this day.

The same class of personages who state that the fairy rings are merely relics of human artifice say that the Agglestone is in no way connected with the ruler of the nether world, but simply a weathered remnant of Lower Bagshot sand, left behind because it has been locally hardened by ferruginous cement!

Whether formed originally on Satanic or scientific principles, it is generally supposed to have been used as a

Druid altar. That Salisbury Cathedral should have been thought to exist before Druid shrines shows that local imagination soared above mere history.

On a small hillock to the north there is another stone called the Puckstone, similar to the Agglestone, but smaller, being only ten feet by eight.

There are several barrows in the neighbourhood.

In *Domesday Book* Studland was called Stolland, and was held by Haimo of the Earl of Mortain. Almar held it in Edward the Confessor's time. The pasture was a mile square. Thirty-two salterns paid 40s. The whole demesne was worth £8. Lands here, as well as at Corfe and Holme, were held by the thegn Edric. The geographical boundaries of the ancient British village of Stolland correspond exactly with the later Anglo-Saxon parish of Studland.

In 1205 King John fitted out at Portsmouth an expedition to invade France, but changed his mind and landed at Studland, where he fined his subjects for not raising a sufficient fleet. He afterwards visited the village several times. There was anciently a castle here at which he may have stayed.

Before the third year of Edward I Studland belonged to William de Derneford, who in that year feoffed it to Robert Walround, who in 1269 conveyed it to the Abbey of Tarrant.

After the Dissolution it was granted to Sir George de la Lynde, from whom it passed in 1562 to Henry Goring, who sold it twenty years later to Sir Christopher Hatton. Studland, with the rest of the Hatton estate, was bought by Sir John Bankes in 1635. Members of the Bankes family still frequently stay at the "Manor House" that the Right Hon. George Bankes, M.P., built in the village of Studland.



STUDLAND BAY



Brownsea Island, which stands at the east end of Poole Harbour and has a baronial castle, is part of the parish of Studland.

Branksey, Bronksey, or Brinksey, that is, Brank's, Bronk's, or Brink's Ea, or Island, is a very pleasant place. The castle stands at the east end, and the rest of the island is shaded by trees and carpeted with flowers. A coastguard station, a few cottages, and a tiny church complete the list of the buildings. On the south side there is a battery of five cannon, though it is unlikely that they would be of use for purposes of defence.

The island, which is about a mile square, is not mentioned in *Domesday Book*, as it was naturally included in the survey of Studland. It is probable that some of the "salterns" said to have been in the parish were on this island. It had its notable moment before the Conquest, however, for the Danes on several occasions used it as a place of refuge. In 1154 Henry II granted the wreck of the island of Brownsea to the Abbot of Cerne. After the Dissolution, Henry VIII gave the island and the water surrounding it to the Earl of Oxford, who in the same year alienated it to Richard Duke. After passing through several hands it became in 1612 the property of Robert, Earl of Salisbury, who sold it in the reign of Charles II. No one held it long, and all the various owners had disagreements with the Poole Corporation as to whether the castle was contained in the demesne of the island. Once in time of war one of the island guards shot the captain of a Poole boat because he was not satisfied with the validity of his papers.

The castle is Perpendicular in style, and was built by Henry VIII as a blockhouse or defence for Poole and the



Frome Valley. Strategically Brownsea Island is the Gibraltar of Dorset, as it guards the chief gateway into this county. The castle was powerfully garrisoned in preparation for the reception of the Spanish Armada, and again armed by the Parliament during the Civil War. Brownsea is now the property of Charles Van Raalte, Esq., who has done much to improve both island and castle. The church, built in the Decorated style, is endowed with the interest of £1000. The living is a perpetual curacy in the patronage of the Bishop of Salisbury.

There are one or two small farms in the parish of Studland, the most important being Newton, which lies on the south shore of the estuary of Poole, about a mile from Ower. Though belonging to the manor and liberty of Corfe, it pays church and poor rates to Studland. It is now the property of Captain Marsden, R.N., who inherited it from Mr. Calcraft of Rempston. We have now only to complete our circle and return to our starting-point, Swanage, by an easy and pleasant walk over Ballard Down.

From that exalted station, to the plain  
 Descending, we pursued our homeward course,  
 In mute composure, o'er the shadowy lake,  
 Beneath a faded sky. No trace remain'd  
 Of those celestial splendours, grey the vault,  
 Pure, cloudless ether ; and the star of eve  
 Was wanting ; but inferior lights appear'd  
 Faintly, too faint almost for sight ; and some  
 Above the darken'd hills stood boldly forth  
 In twinkling lustre. . . .

*The Excursion*, WORDSWORTH.

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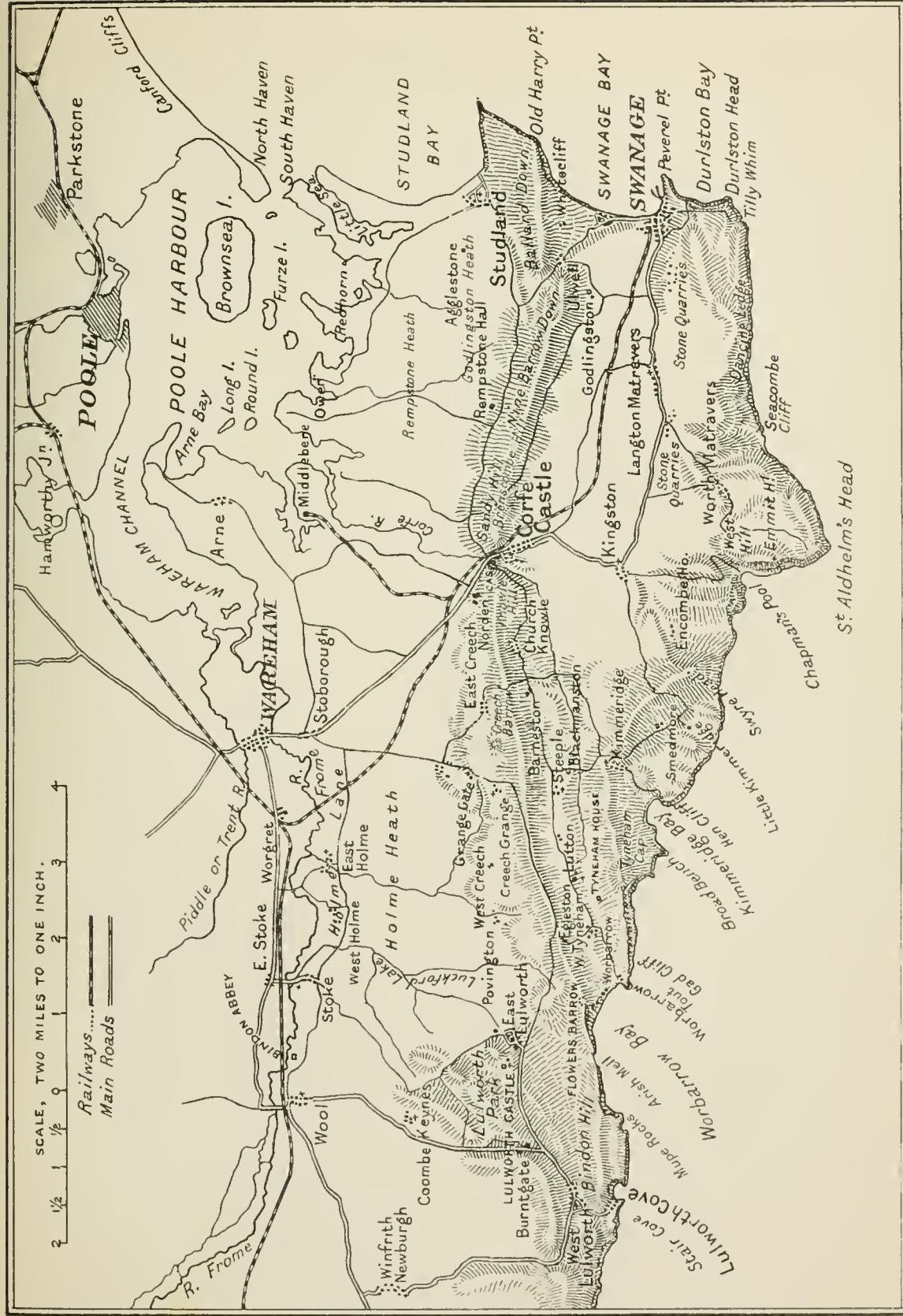
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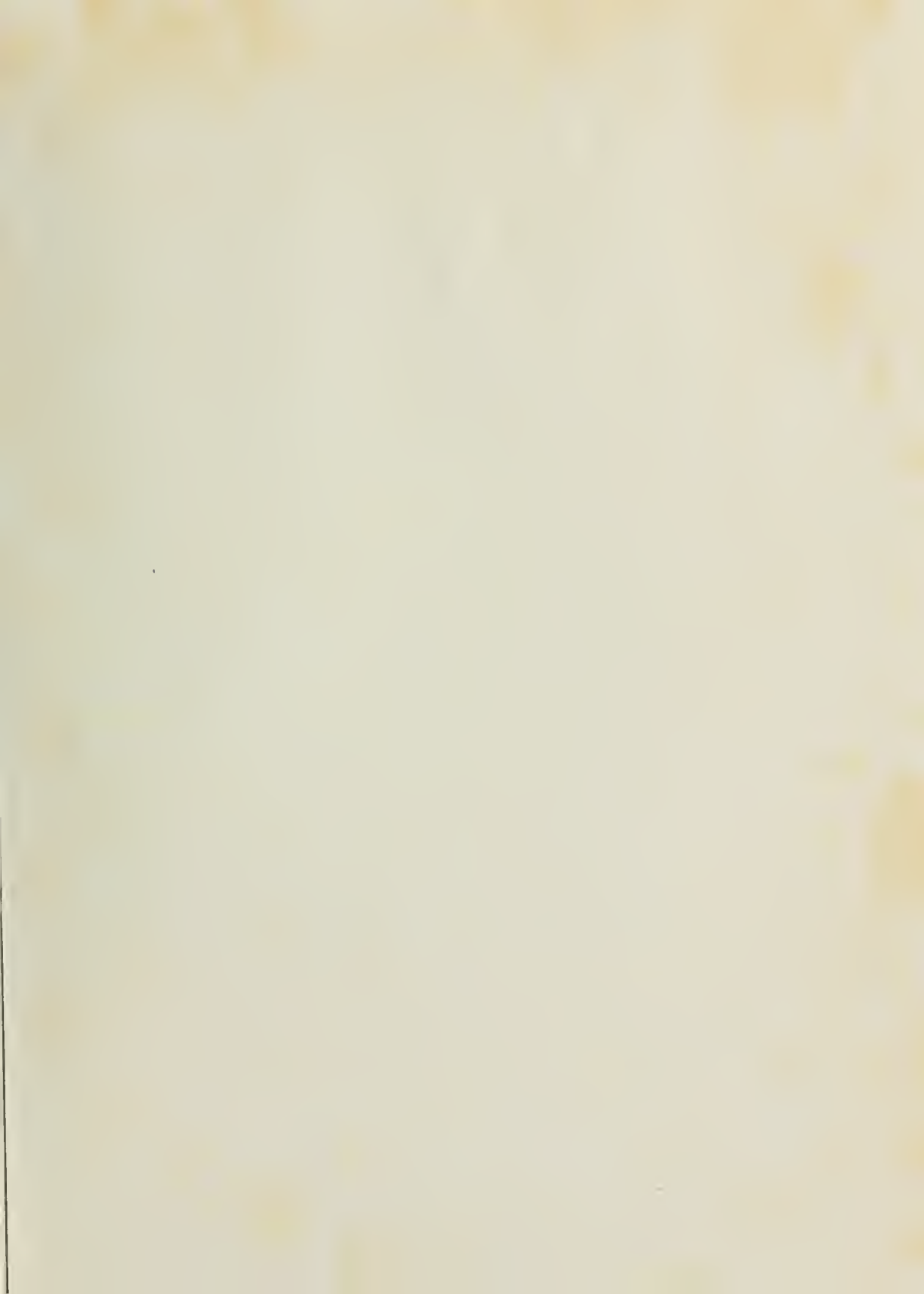
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